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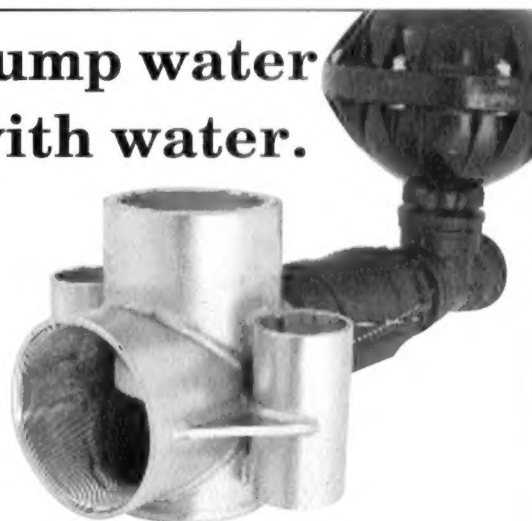
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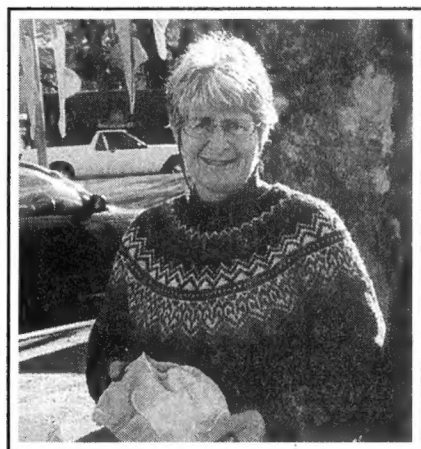
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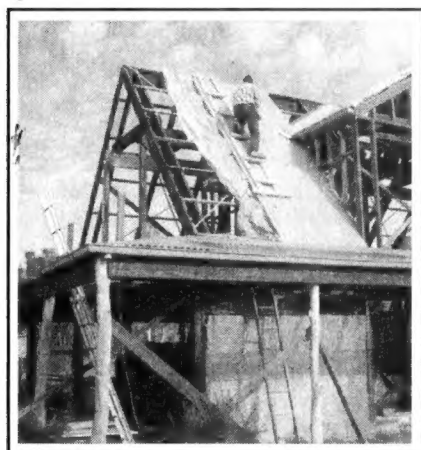
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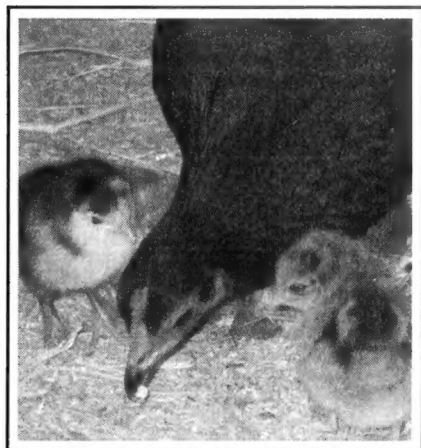
Welcome to Grass Roots magazine



Nappy expert, page 59.



Mudbrick building, page 10.



Broody hens, page 63.

PEOPLE

Farmers' Markets
Growing communities

Anything Is Possible
Realising a dream

See You In Tassie
Pretty close to perfect

FAMILY

Eco Baby, Nappy Wash Knowhow
Save money and help the environment

Keeping Baby Dry
Envirofriendly alternatives

FARMSTOCK

The South Suffolk
This sheep gets the job done

Holistic Alpacas
Beautiful gentle creatures, naturally

A Deadly Disease
Beware botulism

Nursemaid To Josephine
The broody that sat . . . and sat . . .

A Hamburg Tale
And the one that flew into the pan

OWNER BUILDER

Mudbrick Owner Building
A determined achievement

Roberino's Tips For Builders
Prepurchase research

GARDEN

Creating A Mini Orchard
Simple bird excluder

Easy Weed Control
Save your back

Frost In The Garden
Strategy for plant protection

PRACTICAL DIY

Potpourri For Beginners
An aromatic tradition

Sexing Eggs
Old ways live on

The Best Soap In The World
Homemade in bulk

The Hoarding Habit
A plethora of projects

Shutting The Gate
Essential farm skills

Megg Miller 6

Jane Willis 19

Sherrian O'Connor 29

Leah Johnson 58

Megg Miller 59

Megg Miller 13

Joy Allenby-Acuna 25

June Birkett 56
Megg Miller

Sue Turner 63

Leone Marten 64

Beck Lowe 10

Roberino 24

Kathy Boladeros 22

Mary Horsfall 32

Dorothy Creevey 66

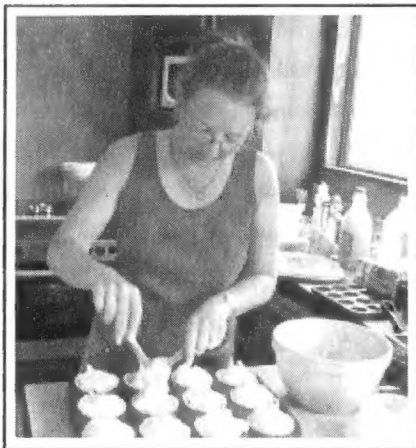
John Mount 9

Wendy Elliot 27

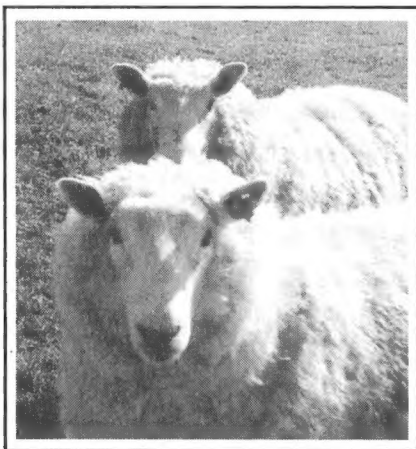
Bob Rankin 28

Vicki Judd 53

John Mount 65



Easy egg recipes, page 51.



Perendales for felt making, page 18.



ON THE LAND

- Poisonous Plants**
Garden grazing caution
- Tracks Ahead**
Good farm access
- Daylilies In Permaculture**
Spectacularly useful flowers

HEALTH

- Hints For Healthy Hair**
Nutrition for the tresses
- Homemade Deodorants**
Give BO the boot

ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY

- Radio Reception On A Shoestring**
Making the antenna

FOOD

- Egg Joy**
Eggstremely easy recipes
- Drying & Pickling Eggs**
Store them for years
- Mead For Me**
Satisfyingly smooth sipping

CRAFT

- A Real Card**
Pretty personalised greetings
- Walking On Wool**
Felting for cosy toes

REGULARS

- Gumnut Gossip*
- Livestock Health & Management*
- Eco News*
- Feedback Link-up Feedback*
- Index Nos 159 – 164*
- Kids Page*
- In The Kitchen*
- What's On*
- Round The Market Place*
- Recent Releases*
- Down Home on the Farm*
- Penpals*
- Grassifieds*
- Club Directory*
- Breeder Listing*

- Mary Horsfall** 26
- Neville Jackson** 54
- Jane Lawrance** 60

- Anna Grove** 21
- Jim Berridge** 31

- Alex Cranford** 69

- Cassandra Turnbull** 51
- Peter Crawley** 52
- Dawn Judkins**
- Royce Bond** 67

- Denise Caudwell** 16
- Jan Clements** 18

- Megg Miller** 5
- 35
- 36
- 37, 45
- 41
- 49
- 50
- 62
- 71
- 72
- Megg Miller** 73
- 74
- 75
- 80
- 81

COVER PHOTOS

- Front Cover:** Miranda Sharp and Don Linke load up with succulent vegies at the St Kilda Farmers' Market. Find out about markets on page 6. Photo by Marcel Aucar.
- Back Cover:** Alpacas are inquisitive creatures. Learn more on page 25.

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

Published by Grass Roots Publishing Pty Ltd, Box 117, Seymour 3661. Ph: 03-5792-4000, fax: 03-5792-4222. For classifieds see page 75.

We take great care in selecting and verifying all material that appears in the magazine, but do not necessarily share the views expressed in letters and articles, nor do we accept responsibility for the accuracy of statements made by contributors. Printed by Newsprinters P/L, Melbourne Rd, Shepparton 3630.

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GUMNUT GOSSIP

by Megg Miller.

Now that it is spring, gardening has become the main topic of discussion. 'My comfrey roots are shooting', said a gleeful Suni. 'They've got huge leaves already. What did you all do to yours?' Suni has been enjoying the fact that her half-dozen pieces of comfrey root have taken off with a flurry while ours are still hibernating in the depths of their pots. You could say she's being a trifle more triumphant than necessary, but it can't be easy talking green matters and growing with old hands like us. Mary mentioned ordering some roots and we all enthusiastically said 'Yes please'. Drought, relocation and the scratching of fowls had accounted for previous plants, surprising really as comfrey is a very resilient, invasive herb. Mary thought Suni's pots might be in a warmer spot than ours. We're waiting patiently, but may have to take up Suni's generous offer of one of her pots.

Such trading isn't restricted to just our team. A couple of turkeys appeared at the front door last week in need of a temporary home, we've a big bag of lemons courtesy of another local reader, and my van is most aromatic today with bags of dried cow pats and spoilt lucerne hay, bartered from a friend. With chooks in full lay, both Sue and I are eager to give away spare eggs. Pop into the office and you'll lumber out with arms full of eggs, lemons or cardboard for mulching.

We're thrilled to have articles this issue on eggs: cooking with them, drying them and even sexing them. Not, of course, that the gender matters if you're going to poach or fry them. Readers hoping to set broody hens will definitely be interested though. Who wants a yard full of cockerels? Please, if you have a tip for determining gender prior to hatching, we'd love to hear about it.

Whether it's sexing eggs or a newsy note, we love hearing from readers. Feedback is our most read section. We were delighted recently to receive a note from the proud mother of gardener extraordinaire and Feedback contributor Glen Haynes. Glen and wife Jo described their anticipated move to Kununurra, WA, back in GR 111, and

shared their plans for the future living on the land with five children. Phillis, Glen's mum, sent in a cutting from an agricultural newspaper that described Glen's success growing pineapples, Thai lemon grass and a range of unusual Asian fruits. Wife Jo maintains there is little chance of an ornamental garden on their property: 'If you can't eat it there's not much chance of Glen wanting to grow it.' Glen is working with local WA Department of Agriculture advisers trialling the fruit crops and, says Phillis, he's working as an orderly at the hospital and Jo is teaching while waiting for the crops to bring returns. We wish Jo and Glen success with their project and thank Phillis for bringing us up to date. Aren't GR folk lovely?

Regular contributor Alan Stewart sends in handy articles on recycling waste materials, but as well he often includes interesting snippets on how folk managed during the war years in England. It was the era of make-do and mend, grow your own food, dig for victory and, one we particularly liked the sound of, wage war on waste. Alan commented that wartime brought out the best and worst in people, but also forced everyone to live with less, to reuse, recycle and be resourceful.

Denise Caudwell from WA shares Alan's passion for making the most of available resources. She confesses to being a collector, like many of us, but puts some of her finds to excellent use in handcrafted cards. In fact, she makes all the cards she requires – baby congratulations, birthdays and Christmas cards and gift tags. By featuring her hints on making cards this issue there should be just enough time to gather together appropriate materials and make a start on personalised Christmas cards and gift tags. Two left hands? No excuse, many of us are similarly afflicted, so rustle up last year's carefully hoarded Chrissie paper, find a couple of appealing motifs, cut them out and glue onto card for gift tags. Once you start, all sorts of possibilities come to mind. If you surprise yourself and come up with a unique idea, do share it with us.

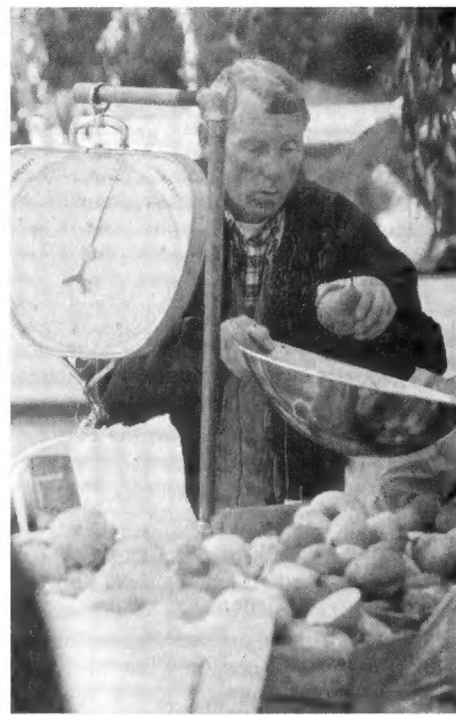
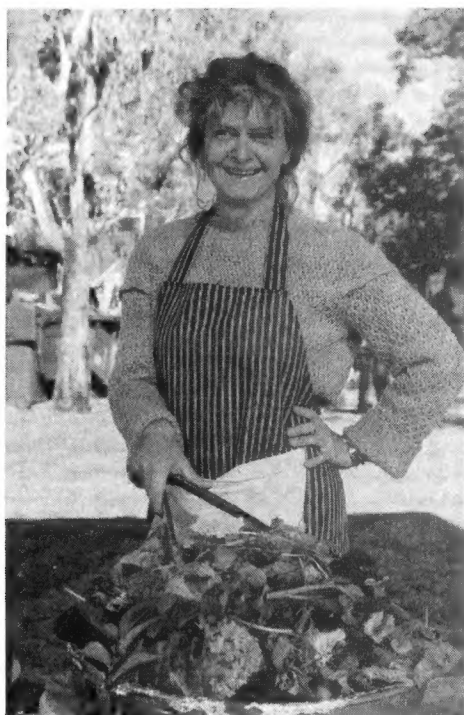
We've had a couple of calls from

Feedback contributors mentioning they had received phone calls from a lonely person looking for a partner. These weren't of a menacing or stalking nature, but it highlighted the fact that people can acquire listed numbers of contributors from Telstra and make contact. Nothing in the Feedback letters suggested the writers were looking for a partner, but these folk were keen to inform readers of the possibility of such calls. We don't publish anonymous letters, but if privacy is a priority a pseudonym is quite acceptable. However, your details should be included with the Feedback contribution, along with advice regarding what is to be withheld. Pity we don't live in a perfect world isn't it.

Since Sabrina has been away on leave enjoying time with baby Marcus, Suni has had to step into the designing and paging role. She may have discovered her artistic calling as she's taken to the job like a duck to water. Maybe I should rephrase that to she's got the bit between her teeth and bolting. Bathing ducks doesn't do her enthusiasm justice. We do have to wrestle for the reins on occasion, but the brighter looking GR is still the same great read.

If you encountered problems buying GR at the newsagents the last few months we can explain why. Our distributor Gordon & Gotch pressed the wrong button earlier in the year, which directed newsagents to put GR on site for a month only instead of the usual two-month period. It's all been sorted out now and we're guaranteed GR will grace newsagents' stands for the full two months as previously.

We've a great story to finish the column with. In GR 163 we included the poem 'Old . . . Who, Me?' written by Bea Scates. Bea says she reads GR from the back through to the front and so got an incredible surprise when she read Gumnut Gossip and saw her poem. 'I was so bemused I cracked my forehead on the glass door that I had forgotten to open!' Careful there Bea and other writers, you're invaluable to GR and we don't want to lose you. Happy and safe reading. ☘



Farmers' Markets

by Megg Miller, Nagambie, Vic.

When lemons pile up under trees, warrigal greens take over the vegie garden, or pantry shelves groan with pickles, it's time to start thinking seriously. Could you make money from your gardening or culinary efforts? Could you stock a stall at your monthly local farmers' market? It's an activity that appeals to many GR readers because it combines using existing resources and earning dollars in an environmentally friendly way.

Farmers' markets are not restricted to rural areas. Some of the most popular and successful are in capital cities and serviced by growers on the fringe of the urban sprawl. Miranda Sharp is the stallholders' coordinator for the St Kilda Farmers' Market, and also the large Collingwood Children's Farm Market. She explained that in some instances backyard gardeners share a stall and offer bunches of herbs or salad greens they've grown on a small plot of land.

You don't have to be a commercial producer to qualify for farmers' markets. You do have to grow or produce

the items offered for sale, not purchase elsewhere and resell, and you have to be prepared to discuss cultivation methods and pest control and offer advice on how to prepare and serve the product you're selling.

You won't only find orchard and garden goodies; farmers' markets offer a range of items. Many carry the stipulation food-only, to reduce confusion with general markets, but this rule usually covers products associated with growing food like potted herbs, open-pollinated seed and even cut flowers. In the main you can expect to find wine, olives, bread and bakery items, farmhouse cheese, sauces, jams, chutney, dried products, speciality lines like preserved lemons, free-range eggs and, if facilities permit, meat or deli items. As well, in-season fruit and vegies are offered, not produce from cool storage. Often seasonal treats like highly flavoured but short-keeping tomatoes, purple- or pink-fleshed potatoes, all sorts of fresh berries, rhubarb and oddities like jam melons, Jerusalem artichokes and snake beans are available.

WHY MARKETS ARE POPULAR

Miranda has observed that there is little pleasure today in doing food shopping. Supermarkets are not spiritually rewarding places to shop and probably not all that economical. Consider the number of essentials that are preweighed and packaged for everyone's convenience. Too bad if you don't need the family size. There is even a move away from loose spinach leaves and salad mix to convenient vacuum-packaged bags. You don't save money when you have to purchase more than you require. What about advice? Youngsters on cash registers don't know their fruits and vegies, let alone have the ability to advise on how to cook them. It's a lucky day when you find an authoritative person to ask a question of or complain to.

'A fresh food market gives shoppers choice, which is something we are gradually losing', Miranda said.

It also provides the opportunity to purchase in different quantities and gain advice on storing and cooking. Fears about chemicals used during pro-

duction can be allayed too. There is the assurance, as well, that produce is regionally grown, not picked green and flown around the globe. An extra bonus is being able to offer growers feedback on their product and share thoughts on what consumers want.

GOOD FOR GROWERS

Although the consumer, the community and the grower all benefit from farmers' markets, there is much gained from this system for producers and growers. By selling directly to the public they're not paying for transportation or to the supply chain. The only costs on the day should be for the market stall and could fall between \$20 and \$200, depending on the size and location of the market.

Selling fresh food directly encourages diversification, for example in testing new lines that are suitable for selling ripe. This adds interest to farming. Normally, growers don't risk nonmainstream lines. Allied to greater satisfaction is a return to pride in farming. According to Miranda, growers get credit for their efforts and the shoppers are astute judges of quality. 'They will tell the growers if they are on the right track or not; the feedback is very honest.'

The social aspect of market day can be important too. Many growers spend long hours on the land with little outside interaction. Miranda said, 'Meeting buyers gives growers pleasure, helps self-esteem and gives them a chance to share the highs and lows of this lifestyle. In many ways it provides a bridge between country and urban dwellers.'

COMMUNITIES GAIN TOO

Communities where a market is flourishing have been invigorated by the extra visitors and activities that occur. Dollars circulated at the market are invested back into local business and there is a more positive feeling about the future of farming.

The emphasis on fresh food has to carry benefits long term and is being applauded by many in the health sector. It is believed changes are occurring in buying and eating patterns and the success of farmers' markets in England and America strongly supports this. Lots of young shoppers are attracted by the chemical-free status of food



Miranda Sharp, stallholders' coordinator at St Kilda Farmers' Market in Melbourne.

offered, concern over pesticides in the food chain being a key motivator. How many shoppers approach markets to buy what's available on the day then top up later at the supermarket? And because they can't wait a whole month for the next market they arrange for direct sales or a vegie box to see them through till the next market.

GETTING ORGANISED TO SELL

Put concerns of being too small or unprofessional aside; if entrepreneurial teenagers can stock and manage a stall, so can you. Research thoroughly and do your homework well. Visit markets and look closely at the products offered in your field, especially those that have been value added. What qualities or characteristics are sellers highlighting? How is produce presented? Are they wrapping it in paper or plastic bags? With value adding, be aware you must prepare your product in an approved kitchen. This needn't mean going into debt; you may be lucky and strike a deal for using the footy club or church hall kitchen. You will need attractive containers and labels too, so look for economical alternatives here as well.

'There are not a lot of backyard growers with small crops so they are best to join forces and share a stall', Miranda said.

Before that stage you will need to have chatted with the market coordinator and ensured you're not growing a crop that is already represented. 'One aspect often overlooked is health regulations. You must have participated in a food safety program. It bothers some people, but is there to give credibility to stallholders, puts them on an even footing with professionals and applies across the board', said Miranda.

Some markets have a policy of allowing only one producer per vegie or fruit to encourage diversity. Research, ask questions and do your sums before rushing into an activity. Ask yourself also if you're prepared to commit to sowing or planting every couple of weeks so you can meet long-term demand.

THE BIG PICTURE

Farmers' markets are not just about buying and selling. 'They are a meeting ground and a place for kids to do lots of tasting and running around', said Miranda. 'It's safe, and there is a real family feel.'

If your community doesn't already support a fresh food market, you might like to introduce the idea. According to the Australian Farmers' Market Association, there are some key points to a successful venture. They recommend setting up as a not-for-profit



Above: Don Linke and son Jack.
Right: The Veg Out community garden
with original bowling green lights.



Veg Out Garden

entity; insurance premiums are more reasonable and it's easier if you seek development funds. Clear rules should be established on food-only items and whether complementary products will be sold. Sticking to these rules prevents problems. It's crucial that authenticity is insisted upon, and this means sellers must be growers, producers or manufacturers and products cannot be bought and resold. Customers need this assurance. Standards of quality or presentation need to be established and met. To minimise disputes over any of these issues it is suggested an operational charter be written and supplied to stallholders. Finally, the success of a market hinges greatly on the manager. Select a person who is energetic, organised and experienced in communicating and working with people.

Miranda suggests that managers be thick-skinned too. 'Whatever happens will be your fault. I get blamed for absolutely everything. I say, "I can be held responsible for most things, but I don't do weather!"'

Farmers' markets local to you can be found at www.farmersmarkets.org.au
Photos taken at St Kilda Farmers' Market and Veg Out by Marcel Aucar. ♡

There is a green oasis in busy, inner-city St Kilda, where a community garden, Veg Out, is the focus for local residents and social groups. A monthly farmers' market held next door complements the garden's activities. Veg Out is unique. Five years ago local gardeners literally took over open space earmarked for a carpark. Now the $\frac{3}{4}$ acre site is home to around 200 gardeners sharing 130 garden plots. They're so keen the waiting list hovers around 75 and these associate members lend a hand with maintenance and learn about growing from the diverse mix of old and young, multicultural and locally born enthusiasts. For some, gardening is serious business and puts food on the table, others grow herbs and flowers and enjoy the feel of the earth. Weekends the gardens attract between 200 and 300 visitors, locals mainly, enjoying the greenery and conviviality.

Don Linke is on the executive that manages Veg Out. He says he got dragged in five years ago to help a friend clean up and when the rubbish had been removed the plot was given to him. He's passionate about Veg

Out and the rich role it plays in the local community, and even met Fiona, his partner, there. Mothers' groups meet weekly, special needs people visit and enjoy the facilities, families enjoy barbecues, kids hold parties, there's an annual Easter egg hunt, and even carols by candlelight.

Don sought out Miranda Sharp to get the farmers' market going, as she had previously helped set up the market at Collingwood Children's Farm. Miranda says the market has brought in a larger number of people to Veg Out to appreciate the wonderful work, and that it's had a cross-pollinating benefit on the gardeners. Veg Out now has the corporate sector keen to establish partnerships, but the gardeners are selective of who they build associations with. Their strong commitment to ethical and sustainable living hasn't waned over the years and is the driving force for the gardeners, the local community who access them and, of course, the farmers' market.

Don Linke is the vice president of Veg Out and can be contacted on 0407-411-198. ♡

Potpourri For Beginners

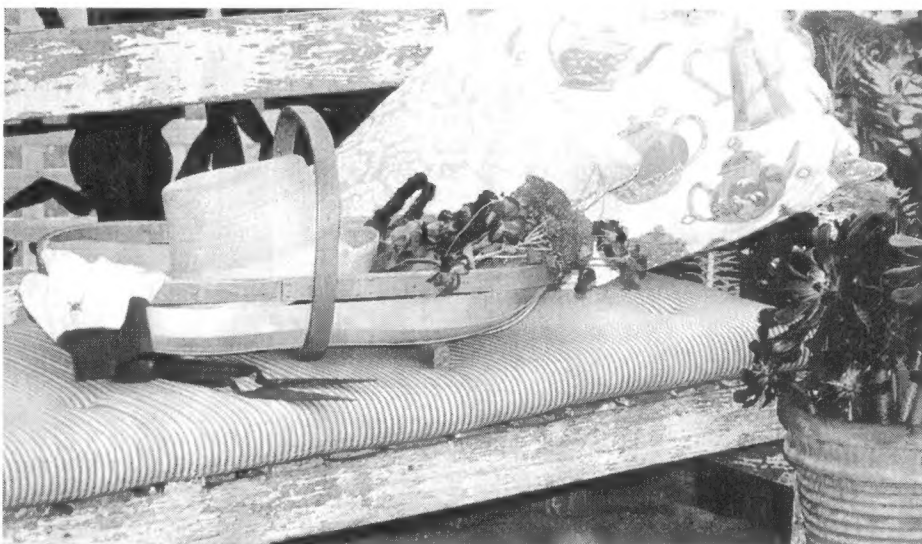
by John Mount, Mount Mee, Qld.

Potpourri is a mixture of dried sweet-smelling flower petals and/or herbs preserved in a pot or vase. A potpourri can enhance the atmosphere of a room by releasing a pleasant smelling scent. The fragrance of the potpourri is, unfortunately, dependent on the life of the plants in the mixture, or more exactly, their oily essences. Once the oils have dried up the potpourri truly becomes a 'dead pot' (as its literal French translation suggests), having no aroma whatsoever.

The traditional ingredients of a potpourri are dried flower petals and fragrant leaves, old favourites being rose and lavender. The beautiful aromas of potpourri are, however, limited only by one's imagination. A unique fragrance can be created by a single ingredient, or by blending a combination of flower petals, leaves, bark, herbs, spices or oils together in varying quantities until just the right aroma is achieved.

To preserve the fragrance of leaves and flowers a fixative can be added to the potpourri to absorb the vital oils and essences and retard their evaporation. There are many different types of fixatives, some of which also have a pleasant fragrance of their own. Orris root powder (from the root of the Florentine iris) and gum benzoin can be obtained from some health food shops. Other fixatives include calamus powder (derived from the sweet flag root) and storax (a balsam from the bark of *Liquidambar orientalis* or *Styrax officinalis*). Fixatives generally come in ground or powdered form, either will suffice.

Although jasmine, violet and hyacinth have wonderful fragrances while fresh, they rapidly lose their scents when dried. The flowers of roses, lavender, lemon verbena and rose geranium hold their fragrances very well. So too do many herbs and spices such as rosemary, thyme, basil, marjoram, ginger, nutmeg, allspice,



caraway, cardamom and the crushed seeds of anise. The oils extracted from rosemary and citrus are also favoured. You can start gathering the flowers for potpourri as soon as they open, and continue adding to the collection through the blooming season. Gather the fragrant colourful blooms for drying on a warm sunny day as soon as the dew has dried. Choose only flowers that are freshly opened, not those whose petals are ready to drop.

To dry these fragrant blossoms, the whole flower can be used, or the petals can be removed and spread on newspaper, plastic sheeting or, best of all, a wooden frame with a fine mesh or cheesecloth attached. The whole is left in a warm shady spot for around two weeks.

Other methods of drying involve covering the plants in layers with dry sand or borax (herbs can be dried in layers with salt) and leaving the covered materials in the sun. Exposing plants to direct sunlight is to be avoided because it bleaches colours and destroys fragrances.

Harvest and wash the herbs, but leave the foliage on the stems. Some of the more tender herbs such as basil, burnet, chives, dill, fennel, parsley and

tarragon can be frozen for later use. Remove dead and dying leaves, tie the ends of the stems together in bunches and hang them upside down in a warm dry place, not in direct sunlight. Every couple of days gently turn or stir the leaves to speed the drying process. After one or two weeks (depending on heat and humidity) the leaves should be crispy dry.

After the components are thoroughly dry, mix them up in a large bowl by themselves or blend together with spices and oils. Experiment first with tiny amounts until satisfied with the resulting aroma. When the final mixtures have been assembled, a fixative can then be added.

The mixture is ready to be arranged in glass jars, bottles, bowls, sachets or other interesting containers. Transparent containers with tightened lids will show off the arrangement and its colours while retaining the scent. The same containers, with lids removed, will allow the arrangement to be viewed and the fragrance to gently waft through the room. Excess material can be stored in sealed dark glass or ceramic containers and kept in a cool place for future use. ♻

Mudbrick Owner Building

Beck learnt many salutary lessons building her mudbrick loft home, but she reckons the view across the valley now is worth all the hard work.

by Beck Lowe, Heathcote, Vic.

I became an owner builder mostly through necessity. I couldn't afford land with a house already on it and knew I would have to build as money became available. Also, owner building was the only way I could get what I wanted. For instance, it would be almost impossible to find a builder willing to work with second-hand materials. I had also enjoyed laying mudbricks for other people and I really wanted to do it again on my own place.

Apart from that volunteer mudbrick laying, however, I had had no building experience at all. I couldn't saw straight or hammer a nail to save my life! Even having to use a telephone (a constant when owner building) causes me to go to pieces. I'm quite happy to admit that I am not cut out for owner building!

HOME DESIGN

I wanted the house to be as environmentally friendly as possible. Mudbricks were perfect for environmental and aesthetic reasons and I already knew that I liked working with them.

A Lofty Choice

I decided on a loft design with an open living and kitchen area downstairs and two small bedrooms and a study upstairs in the triangle of the roof.

I initially thought the loft design would be the most efficient use of materials because it effectively splits the house in two and puts half of it in the roof space. My experience so far has caused me to think this is a fallacy. While there is certainly less concrete required for the slab, and less roofing material needed, there is more timber required in the roof structure. Timber is also needed for the dormers, gables, cladding, upstairs flooring and staircase. In addition, there are far fewer

mudbricks needed. This increase in timber and reduction in mudbricks led to a big increase in the amount of materials I had to bring in from off site, thus increasing the cost and embodied energy of the building. The other problem, in my case, is that carpentry work is so much slower than mudbrick. I think the house would have been ready at least two to three years earlier had it been a single storey.

Despite all this, a double-storey loft home has a lot of aesthetic appeal. And, as I live in a valley, the view from the second storey is a welcome benefit. I'm sure I won't be sorry in the long run.

Benefits Of Post And Beam

A post and beam frame, rather than load-bearing mudbrick walls, seemed the best design for my circumstances. It meant that the roof could go on before the mudbricks were made and laid, allowing me to work on them under cover. It also got the parts I needed the most help with over and done with first, before finances grew too short.

ERECTING THE FRAME

In the first stages I felt I did very little except take the odd photo. I had an earthworks crew in to level the site and dig the trenches for the footings. I employed another local owner builder to lay the slab.

The frame was next and the same guy who did the slab, along with various other locals, was paid to do most of it. When the major part of the frame was complete my money and my patience started to run out. I was tired of having people around all the time and felt I wasn't relating to them very well, so I stopped paying for labour and struck out on my own.

It was at this point that my partner Andrew came into my life. We both worked on the verandah frame, which needed to be built before the roof went on, before Andrew decided that he'd had enough and didn't want to build any more. I also decided that I had had enough, but as I wanted the house I had no choice but to keep going.

I made my slow and agonising way



Two jobs at once: enlarging the dam while removing mud for the bricks.



Top: An early stage of framing with some mudbricks made and standing by.

Top Right: The shape of the house emerges.

Above: Some walls up and roofing started.

Above Right: Radially sawn cladding on the second storey.

through the rest of the frame building. The major structural work was done, but my complete lack of carpentry skills made itself apparent on dormers, gables and battens. I often felt that I was spending more time hacksawing off half-hammered nails that would go neither further in nor out than I was anything else!

MUDBRICKS

The making and laying of mudbricks has definitely been the best part of the building experience. It's mud-pies for grown ups! Although, if Andrew hadn't been there to dig and cart the mud for me, I'm sure it wouldn't have been so enjoyable. There was no question of machinery access where the mud was coming from. As it was, Andrew had a

wonderful time reshaping, extending and beautifying our dam as he removed mud for the bricks.

Although I had planned to do all the mudbrick work once the roof was on, it didn't turn out that way. In moments of despondency, when I could not face another nail or piece of wood, I had started making the mudbricks, covering and uncovering them with black plastic for weather protection. This turned out to be extremely lucky when my building inspector decided that I couldn't get the roof put on until I had laid at least some of the mudbrick walls to provide strength and stability to the frame.

Making The Bricks

I made the bricks by soaking mud and water in old bathtubs overnight. In the

morning I would get in with bare feet and legs and stomp the lumps out and add a bit of straw. To make a brick I shovelled mud into a mould, squashed the mud down, lifted the mould and left it to dry.

Making The Mortar

The mortar was made in a similar manner. Mud and water were again soaked, mixed and stomped in old bathtubs, but this time only the finest, stone-free mud was used. The laying was a messy and fun, but basically straightforward, process of sandwiching the mortar between the bricks.

SECOND-HAND WINDOWS

The most arduous part of building the downstairs walls was sanding down

old window frames. I had bought, been given, and even pulled out of hard rubbish collections, various second-hand windows, the frames of which were covered in old paint. Most of the paint I got off with a heat gun and scraper, but the frames always needed sanding as well. This takes a surprisingly long time to do, even with an electric sander working on the bigger sections. It is also a horrible, messy job that spreads paint dust (containing goodness knows what) everywhere. After the second or third window I had a brainwave and started borrowing talking book tapes from the library so I could be read to while I worked. It was still a long, messy and horrible job, but now I quite looked forward to it.

ROOF TROUBLE

It was around this time that I made a big mistake. I waited until the requisite number of walls were up and I was all ready to put the roof on before looking for a plumber to do it. None of the plumbers in town was interested, so I looked further afield. Eventually, a plumber friend of a friend agreed to take on the job. He came and measured it up and I purchased the materials. Nine months later they were still sitting by the driveway and he was still too busy. I had tried to find someone else in the meantime, but to no avail. There was more work than plumbers in the area and, given the choice, none of them wanted to spend time on a second storey 40-degree slope trying to nail into old hardwood. I can't say I blame them!

Salvation finally arrived in the form of Michael the plumber. He had just



returned to the industry after a break so didn't have too many other jobs booked up. Michael is everything a tradie should be: friendly, polite, knowledgeable and willing to work together to solve problems as they occur. He is also happy to point out any little jobs that I could do myself to minimise my costs.

Although basically complete, the roof cannot have its final flashings

until the dormers and gables get their cladding. This is the point I am at now.

RADIALLY SAWN TIMBER

I am using radially sawn timber boards for the cladding. This is the only new timber I have bought for the house. Radially sawn timber is made by sawing a log into wedges radiating out from the centre. It is a much more efficient way to create usable timber from a log than the traditional horizontal cuts. It gives a big boost to the plantation hardwood industry because smaller trees can be harvested at an earlier stage. The other advantage is aesthetic. The outside edges of the boards, which are visible on the wall, remain in their natural shape of the outside of the tree. This wiggly look blends perfectly with the questionable straightness of the rest of the house.

ADVICE TO OTHERS

I would advise anyone considering a loft design to do their homework very carefully. It is certainly the best option for some, but definitely not for everyone. On the other hand, you also need to follow your heart. The best example I have of this is making my own mud-bricks. So many people advised me against it, but I knew it was what I wanted to do and it was one of the most satisfying parts of the job.

If all this sounds a bit negative, don't be put off. My main piece of advice to anyone considering owner building is to go ahead and do it. If I can do it anyone can! Perhaps in the end determination and perseverance are more important building skills than the ability to wield a hammer. ☺

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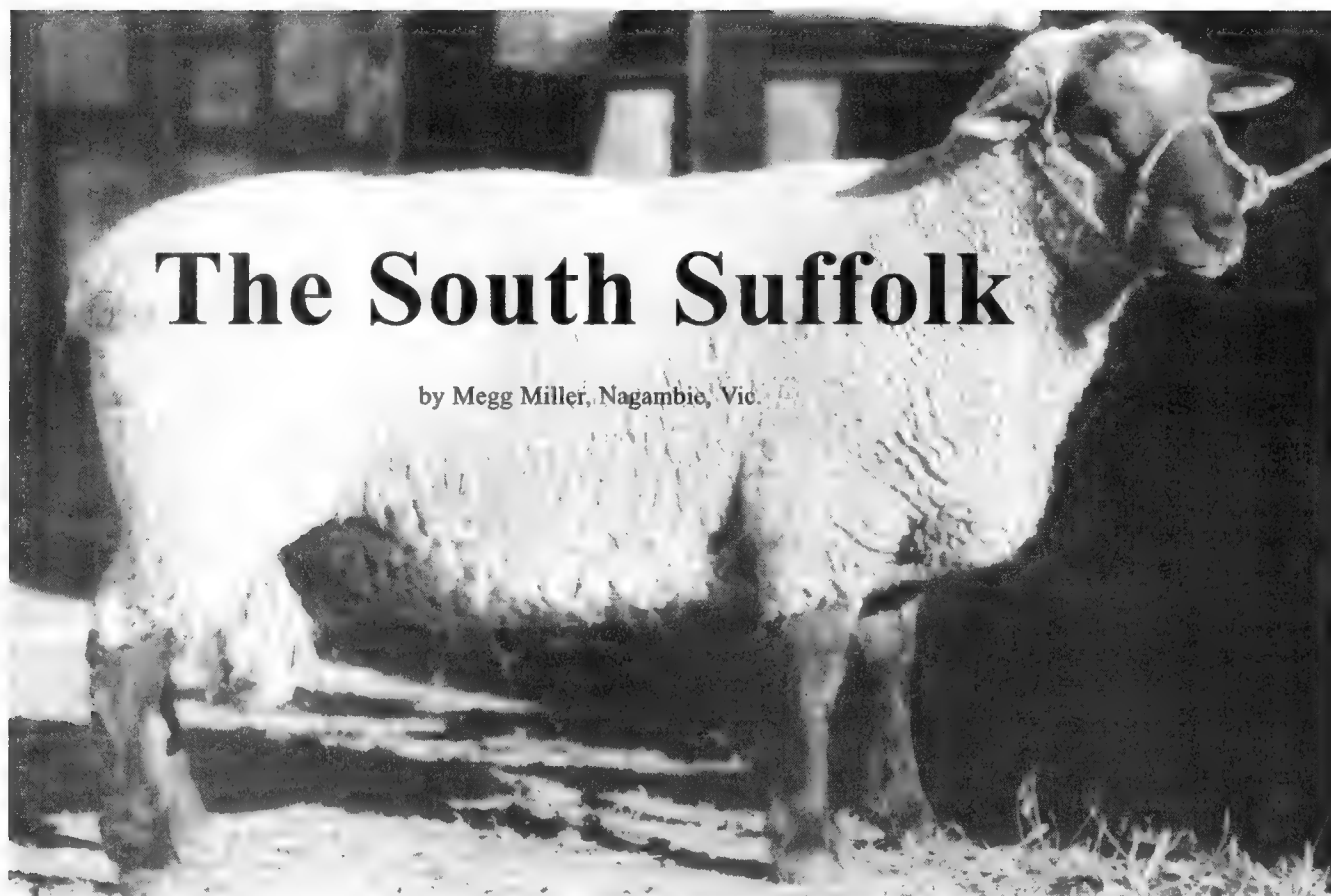
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The South Suffolk

by Megg Miller, Nagambie, Vic

Who can resist a breed of sheep that promises to 'get the job done'? The South Suffolk, derived from two of the top prime lamb producing British breeds, has indeed the pedigree and genes to produce and rear lambs with a minimum of fuss.

The South Suffolk originated in New Zealand in the late 1920s. It was the brain child of Canterbury farmer and sheep breeder Mr George Gould. This gentleman owned a Southdown stud and had imported the first Suffolks into NZ. In his search for a breed that consistently produced a high quality carcass, Mr Gould considered making up a specialist breed and, for direction, consulted with the then Dr John Hammond of the School of Agriculture, Cambridge University, in England. Dr Hammond was supportive of Gould's proposal to create a new breed that incorporated the best features of the Southdown and the Suffolk. The program began around 1929 with crossing both ways: that is, Southdown rams over Suffolk ewes and vice versa, then interbreeding the

progeny. A cross intermediate between the two breeds was created.

Mr Gould was aiming for a sheep with early maturity and desirable carcass shape (Southdown) plus vigour and leanness (Suffolk). At the time the price schedule for prime lamb cuts carried penalties for excess fat so there was much to be gained from uniform quality lean lamb. By 1940 Gould was ready to have his fixed cross recognised as a breed and the NZ Sheep Breeders Association set up a special appendix for registering the flock. By 1952 the South Suffolk was raised to full registration and given flock book status.

The first specimens to come to Australia arrived in 1946. Twelve years later the Australian South Suffolk Sheep Society was established. Later, in 1972, the breed was admitted to the Australian Society of Breeders of British Sheep. Currently there are 29 registered studs with over 1700 breeding ewes between them, which puts the breed above the numbers deemed necessary for conservation. However, the breed does need monitoring.

BREED PROFILE

South Suffolks are medium sized sheep, easily recognised by their chocolate brown face, ears and legs and distinct white topknot on the head. They're polled, clean faced and have a short neck well set in shoulders that are broad and oblique. The chest is deep and wide, the back level and of good length; ribs are well sprung and the tail is broad and well set in. Legs are short and flat boned. Forelegs are set well apart and hind legs amply filled with meat. The chocolate coloured legs are free of wool and the hooves are strong and black. The breed has fine, soft pink skin and any sign of blue pigmentation is objectionable. Fleece is Down's type.

TEMPERAMENT

The breed is active and observant so fencing needs to be good. All clean-faced sheep have an eye for opportunity, including pushing under fencing. Individuals quieten easily and will become pets, and there are no difficulties in handling.

ENVIRONMENT

This is an adaptable breed and has done well in areas as diverse as the cold New England region and hot dry WA. Their hardiness and good foraging ability makes them a good choice for marginal country, with the extra bonus of minimal grass seed problems as a result of their clean face and legs.

FIBRE CHARACTER

Like its progenitors, the Southdown and the Suffolk, the South Suffolk carries a Down's type fleece. It has a short to medium length staple, is around 25 micron and is dense but not tight. There should be no pigmented fibres in the fleece, especially close to the head.

CARCASS PRODUCTION

The South Suffolk was specifically bred for producing lean prime lamb. As a terminal sire, rams are used over Merino or other breed ewes to produce quick growing lambs of uniform quality. South Suffolks have a high meat to fat ratio and produce fine-grained meat with a delicate flavour. With the breed's excellent foraging ability lambs can be produced for the home freezer even on marginal country.

BREEDING

In keeping with the breed society's motto, rams are strong, vigorous and get the job done. They have a reputation for being willing workers even under adverse conditions. Ewes don't normally experience lambing problems, South Suffolks being prepotent for small heads and compact shoulders. Ewes display strong mothering instinct and produce plenty of milk. Lambing



percentages under good conditions are 100 – 120 percent. Lambs are hardy and able to get up after birth and quickly get going even when weather is poor.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

South Suffolks require low supervision, they're hardy, active foragers, encounter minimum problems with dry summer grasses and have negligible lambing difficulties. Photosensitivity due to the effects of plants like St John's wort is rare, as resistance is conferred by the coloured face and ears. Stock manage drought conditions well and are found in many dry areas of Australia including WA. Equally, they're tolerant of wet and irrigation conditions because of their strong hard hooves. This breed deserves consideration for smallholdings, although facilities and fencing would need to be kept in good condition to contain these active stock.

SOCIETY VIEWPOINT

The Australian South Suffolk Society promotes their breed as being profitable,



The attractive looks of South Suffolk lambs belie their vigorous, tough spirit.

fertile and adaptable. The breed is found in all climatic areas of Australia except the NT, from the cold and high rainfall areas to semiarid areas. South Suffolks are demonstrating their popularity by their versatility to all adverse conditions.

Contacts

NSW Branch, Mr K Cronk, ph: 02-6924-2251.

Victorian Branch, Barry Shalders, ph: 03-5597-0277.

WA Branch, David Hicks, ph: 08-9844-7406. ☺

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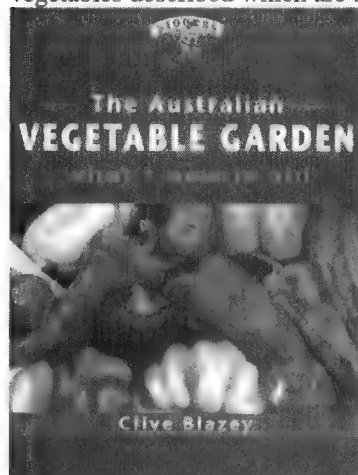
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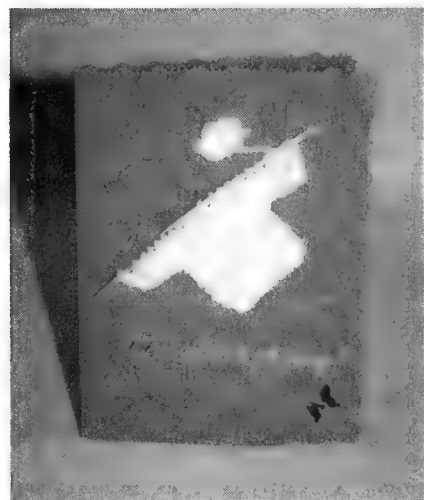
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A Real Card

by Denise Caudwell, Serpentine, WA.



I enjoy making things and have been creating unique homemade cards for some years. It's a satisfying activity, saves heaps of money and doesn't require expensive tools or materials. In fact, it adds a sparkle to visits to markets and shops. I keep a look-out year round for suitable stickers and motifs to use as well as card and coloured paper. Card making is a great way to recycle the previous year's Christmas cards and tags.

SUITABLE MATERIALS

I've built up a supply of different paper and card. It is best to buy discounted lines or offcuts when you see them, then they're on hand when required. As well, I make handmade paper about the weight of light card. When making it I use white paper scraps and add a few torn-up red envelopes, party hats or even crepe paper. My favourite colour paper is a nice shade of pink and, from trial and error over the years, I can recommend crepe paper for obtaining the colour shade desired.

TOOLS AND BASICS

Some card makers use a guillotine for cutting paper or card, but I find scissors are fine or, if I'm trying for a rustic look, tearing the edges gently works wonderfully. If you want something different, try craft scissors from shops like Spotlight or Red Dot. They sell for about \$3, have different cutting shapes and are terrific with cardboard.

For sticking down pictures, shells, seeds and even raffia, I find a craft glue, also available from the shops mentioned above, excellent. In addition, I have a glue gun that is brilliant with the heavier or thicker pods and leaves.

Sometimes it's appropriate to paint the adornments gold. I use Jo Sonya's 'Rich Gold', which costs under \$10 for a 75-millilitre tube and lasts for ages. It works well on leaves and nuts, and even spices like star anise or cardamom pods.

Other collectibles include feathers, native nuts and seeds, leaves, flowers, shells, even seed from corn and sunflowers. Don't overlook the spice

section at supermarkets; Christmas lends itself to whole nutmegs, cinnamon quills and whole allspice, as well as the spices I've already mentioned.

A supply of raffia goes a long way too. Tie it up into little bows and glue to gift tags, or pop a hole in the corner of tags and cards and double up raffia into a generous bow with a couple of long pieces to tie around a gift.

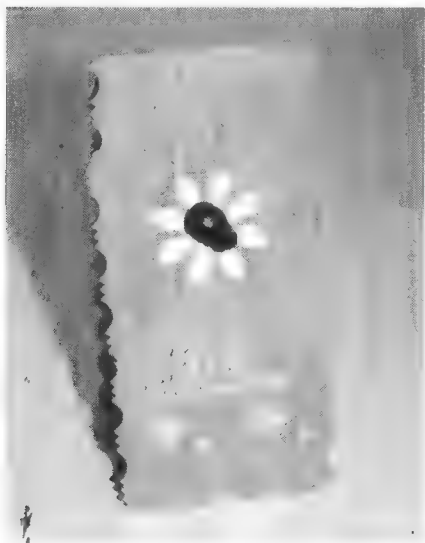
An innovative product is joss paper from Asian supermarkets. Sheets of paper with gold or silver backing or colours on them, in packets of 90 sheets for a couple of dollars, are invaluable and perfect for Christmas cards or other special celebrations.

MAKING AND DECORATING

Cards and gift tags can be made in any size you like. My smallest are 5.5 by 4.5 centimetres and range up to as large as 14 by 10 centimetres. Size generally is determined by whether the card is going in an envelope by post, or whether it is to accompany a bunch of flowers or little gift. Be aware that



Denise creates a variety of cards, from her tiny knitted jumper cards for bubs, far left, to the star anise, shell and gumnut designs and cut-out festive shapes.



nonstandard sizes are quite expensive to post.

With Christmas on the horizon, there is time for readers to make their own cards. My advice is to start simple. Consider green card with gold stick-on stars or Christmas wishes. Try cutting out and gluing onto card coloured paper in the shape of holly leaves, bells or other traditional motifs, or use dried leaves and other trimmings. If you still have last year's cards put away, have a look and see what you can cut out and use.

BE PREPARED

I keep a collection of around two dozen decorated cards I've made in a box that I can go to at a moment's notice. I find half a dozen assorted (to suit most situations) plenty, a couple of baby cards and a couple of festive Christmas ones.

Once you get involved with card making you won't want to purchase commercially produced ones. You'll also start to think about using your trimmings for decorating wrapping

paper or gifts. One Christmas I used newspaper with red raffia and the presents looked terrific, another time it was brown paper with gold painted leaves and nuts. For a festive look that doesn't cost a fortune I glue leaves and nuts to the raffia after tying. You can cut up last year's cards and use the pictures to decorate a parcel wrapped in plain brown or coloured paper.

KNITTED BABY CARDS

One speciality is baby cards; I can't tell you how popular they are. I love making them and, if celebrating the arrival of twins, I make two mini jumpers and glue them on the card. Using size 2.75 (old size 12) needles and three-ply yarn, I start off with 10 stitches, knit a few rows, cast on 5 stitches, then start the next two rows. Knit a few rows then transfer onto toothpicks and glue to a card. Decorate as you wish. These go down very well with mums, grandparents and even sisters or brothers.

Megg's comments in 'Gumnut Gossip' about boxes and bags of bits and pieces, all waiting to be recycled, prompted me to share my ideas about what I do with my collection of all manner of interesting things. I seem to add to the collection as I go along, picking up little 'finds' when walking, because they're too nice to pass by, and putting them in a box for another day. You can imagine what an assortment I have, but it's satisfying to be able to use many of these and bring pleasure to others with lovely personalised cards. ♡



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Walking On Wool

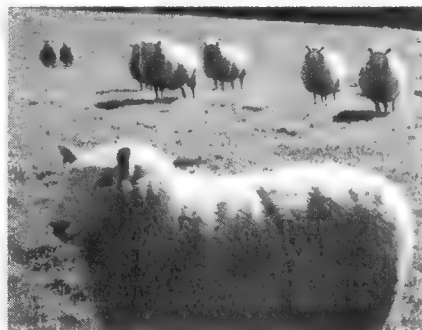
by Jan Clements, Beechworth, Vic.

If your toes go numb on cold mornings when weeding or milking, felt maker Jan Clements has the perfect solution.

We have a small property near Yackandandah in the hill country of north-east Victoria. For the past 15 years we have run a small flock of about 70 sheep. We started with all Tukidale carpet wool sheep, but in the last few years have been changing to Perendales. This breed originated in New Zealand from a Cheviot-Romney cross that was bred for hill grazing on unimproved pasture, making it very suited to our farm.

The Perendale fleece is strong and full-bodied and much easier to felt than the Tukidale. When I started felting about 12 years ago, I made rugs from Tukidale fleece, but it was hard work. I am a full-time felt maker, with a studio in Beechworth, so it is important to be able to value add to the fleece that we produce. Other fleece I use in my felt making includes Merino, Corriedale and English Leicester.

It is fairly easy to scour and card Perendale fleece. The staples tease easily, it does not have much lanolin and usually cards into nice batts. However, it is time consuming and hard on the shoulders when preparing enough fleece for large rugs. This year we took about 50 kilograms to Joe Clarke at the Goldfields Mohair Farm, Bendigo, to be processed into batts. The resulting



Perendale sheep produce springy fleece, perfect for making cosy insoles for shoes.

two-metre wide, one-kilo batts were very smooth and extremely easy to lay out. I began to think of products other than rugs and cushions to make from the Perendale fleece. As the Perendale felt is springy and hard wearing, felted insoles came to mind.

I laid out a quarter of a batt (250 grams) at a time and cut six or seven pairs of insoles from the resulting five-to eight-millimetre felt, using patterns from purchased insoles. The actual felting was done on my felting machine, designed and made by Mike Parrant of Wangaratta. This machine has helped dramatically improve my output (and my shoulders) in the past three years.

For those of you wanting to try making insoles, use a strong wool,

carded as smoothly as possible. Allow for 40 – 50 percent shrinkage and lay out to give at least a five-millimetre thickness in the resulting felt. This thickness will be compressed with wear. A pair of Perendale insoles should weigh 24 to 32 grams, depending on size. The insoles are warm, comfortable and washable; great for wearing inside gumboots to keep your feet cosy.

Insoles, in sizes 5 to 12, can be purchased by mail order for \$8 (including postage) from: Jan Clements, Feltworks at Beechworth, PO Box 108, Yackandandah, Vic 3749. Phone Jan: 02-6027-1533 AH. Jan also sells a DIY felt making kit that is a lot of fun. ☺

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When I was 15 I found my mum's *Grass Roots* magazines and they really opened my eyes and mind to what could be achieved. I set myself a goal: I would give myself 20 years to achieve self-sufficiency. Plenty of time, I thought. Wrong, oh how wrong. Now, as an adult, I can see that I forgot to factor in family, children, finances, work, bills and bad relationships. Considering all the setbacks, I finally got started in January 2003, albeit just a little behind schedule, and was able to do it with a loving partner and caring children by my side.

SEVEN ACRES OF PARADISE

My name is Jane, my partner is Jim and my three girls are Jem, Jazz and Zoe. I also have a son who lives in Melbourne with his father. Jim and I bought our little piece of paradise 12 months ago, in the middle of a drought-stricken area. It is a beautiful seven-acre patch, four acres of fenced paddocks, and of the remaining three acres approximately one acre is full of trees and shrubs. We are fortunate to have a one-megalitre dam and a small irrigation water right, which we had to learn how to use. The fun part was just trying to figure out where our wheel was. For house water we have three 23,000-litre concrete tanks.

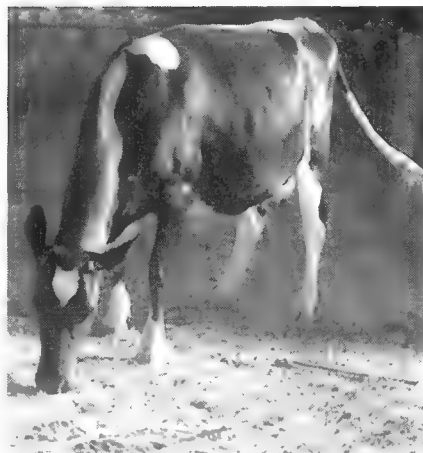
Even though we live on a major highway and the house is only 30 metres from it, the house is not visible from the road and the trees tend to screen out much of the traffic noise. After living in towns for so long the privacy that we now have is grand.

SELF-SUFFICIENT IN TWO YEARS?

When we purchased the property we both desired to be as self-sufficient as possible within a two-year period. Quite an achievement if we could pull it off, as Jim works full time in the banking industry and I work from home. We had a long way to go and we had to start somewhere.

Chooks and Cows

The first task on the list was to fix the large chook yard and shed as well as the smaller one, which also needed a shelter built, as we were to take delivery of



Anything is Possible

by Jane Willis, Numurkah, Vic.

a dozen chickens, two geese and a gander from Jim's mother.

We had to rewire fences in some places and replace wire in others, especially the paddocks, to make sure the three new poddy calves didn't escape. Only one of these was given a name; the red heifer Sunday became our house cow, and the kids were given free rein to go and play in the paddocks with her. She is now quite large and is the most placid animal; she even allows us to play with her teats. She loves to play chasey and we have to watch our tools as she likes to pinch them. The other two were Friesians, a heifer and a steer, that were destined for the freezer at a later date.

The First Vegies

We attempted to resurrect the original run-down garden beds, but realised they would be too small for our plans. So we put our energies into digging and fencing a 20-metre-square area behind the glass hothouse. This gave us plenty of room to start planting. Being the novices that we were (and we are far

from being experts at the moment), our garden did not produce much in the first season of planting: a handful of broadbeans, a couple of lettuces, a lot of broccoli seeds and heaps of weeds.

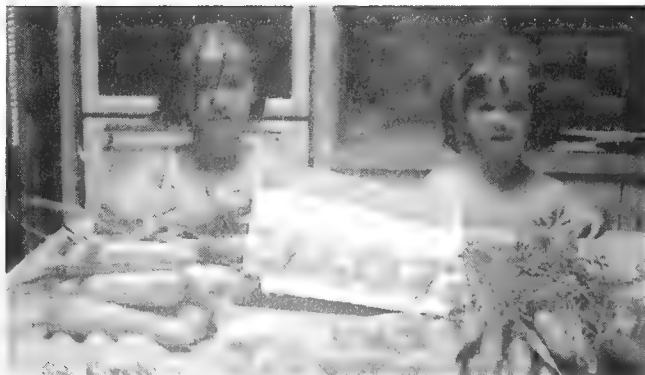
Planting and Pruning

Next on the list was the small orchard, with apples, oranges, apricots and quinces that were in desperate need of pruning. I am not an expert at this either, but had had some experience with pruning and budding nashis and grape vines and set to work brandishing my pruning snips and saw. I worried terribly whether my actions had been right and effective, but the trees looked better and were more open. We planted plum, peach, mulberry, lemon, raspberry, blackberry and mandarin and re-laid the irrigation system, which we found easier after a little rain.

Pigs Join The Farm

A friend was disposing of his pig business and we purchased three little piglet sows from him. Which meant, you guessed it, more work. We had to build an enclosure for them, so some research was needed because neither of us had any idea what to do with or expect from these animals. Our aim was to have two for the freezer and one for breeding, which meant we had to acquire a boar. We found our boy, a Large Black boar, advertised in *Grass Roots* and headed out to Samaria (approximately a two-hour round trip) to collect him. He had the biggest ears that covered his eyes. Heading home with him in the trailer we were trying to figure out what to call him. My suggestion was Sam and Jim's was Flappers. Why Flappers? If he stood in the trailer facing the direction we were travelling you would have thought he was trying to fly off, doing his imitation of Dumbo the elephant.

Building the pen was a trial. We laid bricks for the floor and concreted over them, and crossed our fingers that all the posts and wire we used would make the enclosure strong enough to hold the pigs as they got bigger. People recommended we keep them away from the house as they would stink. I



Jem and Jazz with a satisfying harvest.



Flappers and his three lovely ladies.

found the only time they do become a bit pongy is when their enclosure gets wet and is not mucked out. I now have a healthy respect for pigs and love to watch them eat and play; they are very intelligent animals.

LEARNING AND PROGRESS

Twelve months on we are very happy with the progress we have made. As well as the above, we have put two cows in the freezer and purchased some more geese, which will eventually end in the same place, with a couple of pigs to follow in the next few months. The geese are free-ranging now, which cuts down on the amount of feed we have to purchase, and we allow the cows to free-range as well, so we can give the paddocks a spell.

The fruit trees are not doing well, other than the grapefruit and the quince, but this could have something to do with free-ranging cows. Jim has had to fence off the orchard area, so we might be a bit more successful in that area next year.

We also purchased a pregnant heifer, so will shortly have milk for cheese and yoghurts, and we have built a rather basic milking shed. Our chickens are laying anything from eight to a couple of dozen eggs a week. The geese laid lots of eggs, but few hatched, only to be taken by crows, and other eggs were destroyed by crows. This year we will look at covering the pen areas with shadecloth to keep the flying predators at bay.

The vegie garden is doing better, with a harvest of some 40 cobs of sweetcorn, lots of carrots and cabbage and heaps of tomatoes, also pumpkin, onions, leeks, potatoes and snow peas. We have discovered that good old pig poop is a wonderful manure for the garden. We put it through the shredder/chipper and it comes out in a lovely light and free mix. We tried to do the same with the cow manure, but found it to be too light, once dried, to go through the machine easily, and tended to choke up inside it. We now place the cow manure in barrels that are then filled to the brim with water. The resultant muck stinks to high heaven after a while and is dug into any unused garden beds. It seems to do the garden good. We have no need of a compost bin as the pigs are excellent recyclers and will eat just about anything. Their pen is next to the vegie garden, so it is just a matter of throwing scraps over the fence.

Automatic watering systems have been put into all paddocks and pens, so there is no need to cart water, which is a blessing. Except in the pigs' yard where they seem to take pleasure in uprooting theirs on a weekly basis,

resulting in a flooded pen and mud up to our boot tops when fixing it.

We researched the idea of stocking the dam with fish, but have decided the dam is too small and shallow for this; it would also require the dam to be full at all times. We had toyed with the prospect of putting fish in the swimming pool, but this idea was not appreciated by the kids. Looks like we'll have to wait until the kids move out of home, in about 15 years.

Now that two of the cows are gone, we are considering purchasing some lambs and maybe even breeding meat rabbits as well.

Realising the Dream

We have come a long way, and have learnt a lot from trial and error, from reading and from sharing experiences with other people. There is still a long way to go, but with persistence, perseverance and lots of talking, reading and sharing I know that we will get there in the end. Or maybe we won't. Self-sufficiency, I have found, is an ongoing project. There will always be something that needs to be done, planted, fixed; some new idea to try out or project to attempt; or some problem that needs a solution. It may have taken me 20 years to get here, but I plan on staying here for a long, long time. I never thought that I would realise this dream on my own, but finding a soul mate with the same dreams and desires, wants and needs, and being able to work together as a partnership makes absolutely anything possible. To all of those with a goal of self-sufficiency, don't give up on your dreams – anything is possible. ☘

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Hints For Healthy Hair

by Anna Grove, Spring Hill, Qld.

It's great fun experimenting with new treatments for your hair using ingredients from the cupboard. I have tried milk, olive oil, banana, cooked pumpkin and squeezed lemon juice. The milk smelt like stale cow, the olive oil needed shampooing out twice, the banana was sticky, the pumpkin absorbed and smelt sickly, and the juice was too astringent and stung.

The trouble was, they weren't well balanced, so I cooked my hair a dinner! A delicious vegetarian dinner, based on pumpkin, using vegetables, herbs and lemon juice to create a tasty, moist product enriched with natural oils. I puréed the dinner, rubbed it through my hair, and left it on for a comfortable time before rinsing it out. It was time consuming, but successful! I now appreciate the efforts gone into making well-balanced commercial shampoos and conditioners.

The next natural hair treatment I tried was more economical than the complete meal for my head. I quartered an orange (a lemon also works) and rubbed it through my dry hair, left it on for a comfortable time, then rinsed it off. I needed to comb bits of fruit flesh from my hair and clean them from the bathroom after rinsing, but the fruit oils obtained from the flesh made the extra work worthwhile. Lemons and oranges have a fine oil, lemon being more astringent than orange, but both are less astringent

than the squeezed juices.

My light-coloured hair began to show the colour of the fruit, especially after hair exposure to sun. My hair colour was also changed by the colour of foods eaten and liquids drunk. Coffee, tea and gravy darkened my hair, a lot of green food gave a greenish tinge, and pumpkin, carrot, orange and apricot gave an orangy tinge.

Why does hair grow where it does? As well as hereditary reasons, I discovered my hair grew in accordance with the quantity and direction of exercise I did. For example, reflexology nail-buffing exercises for growing hair increased its growth fast.

Brushing my hair in various directions caused hair to grow more in either the same or opposite direction to which I brushed.

I brushed 10 strokes in the direction shown in each diagram; repeated all that, and finished with 10 strokes in the direction of diagram 1. The first time I

Diagram 1



Diagram 2



Diagram 3



brushed in the direction of diagram 2, I brushed my free hand over my head, following the brush, for arm and brain coordination practice. Total number of brush strokes is 440. Brushing thus once or twice a day, with a sensible diet and other well-balanced exercise, grew my hair back thick and fast where I had regularly plucked areas on the top of my head, around the temples and behind the ears bald with tweezers, to remove white hairs over a period of seven years.

With the hair brushing mentioned, not only did hair grow back fast in the bald areas, but hairs began to grow further down my forehead and further around my face at the sides.

I read in a hand reflexology book that the inventor of nail-buffing grew a new head of hair from a bald head when in his 70s. There is a claim that a person's natural hair colour can grow to replace grey hair by nail buffing with a correct diet. The correct diet wasn't given. ☺

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CREATING A MINI ORCHARD

by Kathy Boladeros, Leonora, WA.

Living on the edge of a desert miles from anywhere isn't any protection against garden pests, I've found. One of these is the persistent yellow-throated miner bird (*Manorina flavigula*), which descends on our stone fruit orchard every year.

We have an ancient plum tree with a spread of nearly seven metres. Each January it is covered in white blossoms, and by April the fruit is just on the turn: too early to pick and, you'd think, too hard to be appealing to the birds. And yet, they dart in, peck a couple of holes and the fruit falls to the ground, of no use to anyone. Netting is too difficult over such a large canopy, but I've tried an interesting array of other deterrents such as foil strips, lengths of toilet paper, and CDs twirling amongst the branches reflecting the sun. One year I sent away for a plastic hawk bird scarer, which involved a fair amount of assembling and needed a few offshoots to get it aloft, suspended by fishing line between the windmill tower and two other high points so that it wafted in the breeze above the plum tree. That actually was quite effective, but we neglected to take it down between seasons and within a few months it was hopelessly tangled and coming apart.

Five years ago I decided to start from scratch with some new trees by enclosing them in birdproof netting, and this has proved so far to be very effective. The trees, an apricot and a peach, have been in for five years and producing for three. The fruit can ripen on the stems, allowing us to pick as required rather than all at once to keep ahead of the birds.

MATERIALS

To build an enclosure three metres wide by four metres long and three metres high I used:

- 9 x 1.5 m steel pickets
- 3 x 6 m lengths 40 mm poly reticulation pipe
- 7 x 4 m lengths 25 mm poly reticulation pipe



Top: easy-to-make arched trellis.
Above: The mini orchard made from pickets and polypipe holds two fruit trees.

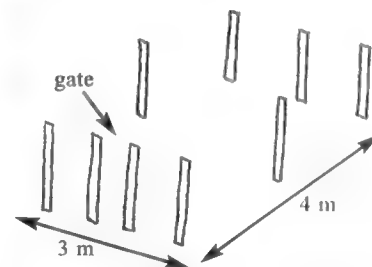
- 1 x 3 m of the same
- 2 x 1 m of the same
- 3 x 3 m x 45 mm poly windmill pipe
- approximately 40 m x 1.5 m chicken netting
- old gate, 1.8 x 0.8 m
- soft wire for joining

BUILDING THE ENCLOSURE

Before starting, it's a good idea to straighten all the poly except the three long pieces. Do this prior to cutting the pieces by uncoiling the roll to the total length you want, anchoring it so that it lies in a straight line, and leaving it in the sun for a day or so.

Step 1

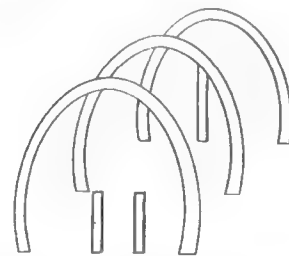
Measure out a rectangle 3 x 4 metres where you want your orchard and hammer pickets in at corners and halfway along both sides and one end. Measure for the gate in the centre of the other end and put two pickets in for the frame.



Steel pickets hammered in a rectangle.

Step 2

I wanted to build my enclosure as cheaply as possible so I made use of scrap materials we already had on hand. This included the 40-millimetre poly, which didn't fit over the pickets. I had to cut slits in the ends and splice them to the top of the pickets, twitching them in place. Using 50-millimetre poly, the pipe should slide right over the pickets to ground level and thus be well anchored. Add another 2 metres to the length if using the larger size poly.



Polypipe over pickets makes the arches.

Starting with one corner, slip one of the 3 x 6 metre (or 8 metre) lengths over the picket then bend it over to form an arch at one end, slipping the poly onto the adjacent corner picket. Repeat for the centre and opposite end, creating three parallel arches.

Step 3

Twich one' of the 45-millimetre windmill pipes to the centre back picket, and to the centre of the arch, to enable the arch to maintain its shape. I don't think you could use reticulation poly in place of the windmill pipe, as it probably wouldn't be strong enough to hold the structure upright. The last thing you want is a sagging bird enclosure.

I drilled holes in the poly to thread the twitches through. At the other end, twich the remaining pipes to the gate pickets and the arch above.

Step 4

To keep the arches evenly spaced and provide a framework for the netting, attach the seven lengths of 25-millimetre poly at 1-metre intervals up the sides and across the roof of the structure. The 3-metre length goes across

the centre at the back, and the two 1-metre pieces either side of the gateway.

Step 5

Cover the frame with netting, burying the ends to keep rabbits out.

Step 6

Twich the gate in place. Bury bricks under the gate to stop the rabbits from coming in.

GENERAL COMMENTS

This enclosure is big enough for two fruit trees, with room around the sides for vegetable beds and potted cuttings.

Even after straightening the poly at the beginning, over time with temperature fluctuations my enclosure has developed a somewhat quaint appearance, but that's okay because it fits in with the rest of the garden.

Had I used new materials, at today's prices this project would have cost around \$430 plus labour.

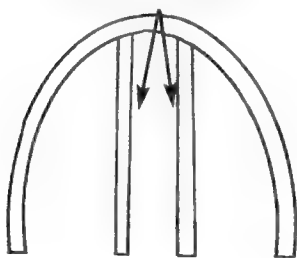
Garden Arches

I have used the same principle to erect arched trellises, which are wonderful for creating doorways that lead into different sections of the garden.

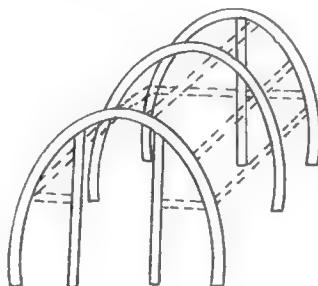


Top: Kathy with her homemade arch.
Above: Polypipe drilled for wire twitching.

45 mm poly gate posts



Pipes twitched to gate pickets.



Pipe attached up sides and over roof.

To make an arch you need:

- 4 pickets
- 2 x 4 m lengths 50 mm poly
- 4 x 0.8 m lengths 25 mm poly
- approximately 5 m x 0.9 m of weldmesh or any type of netting

Build in the same way as the bird enclosure, spacing the pickets in a 0.8-metre square. Plant a creeper on each side and let the sun and the watering do the rest. ☘

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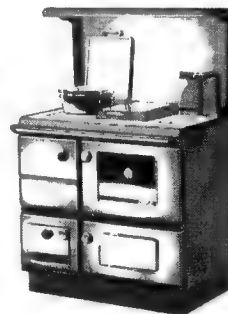
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Roberino's Tips For Builders

by Roberino, Arrawarra Beach, NSW.

When choosing a patch of dirt on which to build your dream home, it is wise to be cautious and do some detective work before paying the full price. Make sure your deposit can be refunded if, for any good reason, you don't wish to proceed with a full settlement for a block of land. Naturally, you can't just change your mind on a whim and waste the time of the seller, who might have others interested.

Speak to a local building inspector, if you can, regarding any negative aspects of the block; local experience is invaluable, but hard to get these days when a private building inspector might not even live in the area. Talk to neighbours, who will probably know all the local goss; at the same time you can be deciding whether or not you want to live next to them – it's too late once you have paid your money.

Potential problems to look for and ask about include areas prone to flood, bushfire and landslip; vehicles careening off the road at that point; water seeping from underground; steep slopes; unstable soil or rocks; drainage problems; termites or other pests; and lack of vehicle access. If any of these problems exist, seek advice from professional experts with adequate professional negligence insurance in case things go wrong, as they can and do.

Don't be pressured by salespeople to 'buy now or you'll miss out'. Take it



Cracks in the wall, a heart-breaking experience best avoided by adequate research.

slowly, sleep on it, ask advice from older more experienced people you know. Other people are often able to see a situation more clearly and objectively.

I've seen people who should have known better buy a very, very expensive piece of dirt, build a very, very expensive pole house on the extremely steep block with stunning water views, only to have the house collapse due to landslip. A geo-tech survey would have predicted the disaster.

I remember my dad telling me about a simple test that was used on problem land in the 1940s. They drilled vertically down to 15 metres in various places and took core samples. If any doubt arose about landslip, thin brittle bakelite pipes were put into the bore

holes. The pipes were pre-painted white on the inside. Six months later the pipes were examined with a strong torch to see if they had cracked due to soil movement. Other clues to look for are trees at odd angles, scoured out wet patches and areas of soft earth.

Some houses on the Gold Coast were condemned as unsafe and had to be demolished when unstable fill had been used to fill up marshy swamp-land. If buying a house in a possible problem area, look for cracks in walls or concrete slabs and uneven or sloping floors (test for level with a marble). Talk with neighbours, as above, maybe even people down the street – bad news travels fast. All the very best of luck with your new purchase. ☺

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Holistic Alpacas

by Joy Allenby-Acuna, Tarago, NSW.



Our love affair with alpacas began in 1990 when my Uruguayan husband and I travelled to South America. The opportunity arose for us to start raising alpacas in 1995. Two years later we had 10 alpacas on our two acres so decided to move to a larger property of 64 acres. In the seven years we have been on the property we lived in a caravan for six months, a civilised shed for six years, and have recently moved into a nearly finished rammed earth home.

The land had been vacant for four years before we bought it and no chemicals or stock had been on it for at least that time – a situation that perfectly suited our desire to run an organic smallholding. We have lovely native grassland, dotted with a few trees and rocks; it is well suited to alpacas, being very similar to their indigenous environment.

The climate of the area, although too hot in summer, is not very far from that experienced in the alpaca's South American homeland. We avoid any potential problems caused by overheating in summer by shearing our

animals in late November; this means they have enough fleece by winter to keep them warm.

FEEDING ALPACAS

A creek running through the property encourages the growth of many reeds and grasses, which the alpacas have access to. We make up a supplement that is given once a day to all stock or twice daily to pregnant and lactating animals. Special ingredients in the supplement include garlic powder for worm control, seaweed meal to provide selenium, and apple cider vinegar for worm control and relaxation of muscles before birth. The alpacas love poplar and willow leaves, which are very good for them. They adore carrots, apples and most other fruits, and some breads. Alpacas should not be allowed near oleanders or rhododendrons, which are poisonous.

KEEPING STOCK HEALTHY

As well as having the creek to drink from, the stock have free access to fresh water troughs, in which we place lengths

of copper pipe and zinc bolts so the minerals gradually seep into the water.

No Vaccinating or Drenching

Our organic methods, especially our refusal to vaccinate or drench our stock, have led to us being regarded as a little eccentric by other alpaca breeders. Our animals' worm count, however, is negligible, and we believe that vaccination has never been proved effective in alpacas and has even led to the death of some crias. We are convinced that well cared for and properly fed animals will seldom get sick. Our alpacas bear this out with their healthy appearance and shining coats.

Maintaining Soil Health

Soon after coming here we top-dressed the native pasture with lime and dolomite, as advised by a soil testing laboratory. This has ensured that the soil is healthy and able to grow good pasture that keeps the stock healthy.

Husbandry

Husbandry is minimal. We shear once a year and clip the animals' toenails occasionally. Once a week, for the three weeks following shearing, we put yellow sulphur on their backs as a lice preventative. We have enough shelter to protect all our stock in inclement weather.

Natural Remedies

To keep stock well in winter we give them vitamins A, D and E and cod-liver oil once a month. Throughout the rest of the year these supplements are given monthly to crias and pregnant or lactating animals. The vitamins A, D and E are in liquid form, mixed with cod-liver oil and given by mouth in a syringe.

Vitamin C is given to alpaca mums after a birth as a general pick-me-up and to assist healing. This vitamin is given



by mouth. We keep it on hand so it is available in case of snakebite, which, fortunately, has never happened in spite of the many tiger snakes around.

Vitamins B12 and B15 are given by injection when needed as an immune boost for any animal that appears unwell, such as recently in the case of a young cria whose mother was not producing enough milk. Just a tiny amount is needed for crias, about one millilitre.

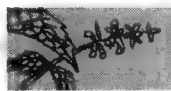
Tahitian noni juice is another remedy we keep on hand to give as a general tonic. Wounds are treated with topical applications of honey and runny or discharging eyes are washed out with salty water.

We use all of the above remedies and supplements on our other farm and

domestic animals, including dogs and a variety of poultry.

A GENTLE NATURE

Alpacas are beautiful creatures and ours are very gentle and friendly. We breed for gentle nature, fine fleece and good conformation and have all colours represented in our flock. They are very good mothers and are often seen nurturing, kissing and nuzzling their babies and teaching them to roll. Alpacas will cry when ill. Though we have not experienced too many problems with illness in the flock, we did raise an orphan which cried for two nights until he settled down and got used to the bottle. He now thinks I am his mother and the dog is his companions. 🐾



Poisonous Plants

by Mary Horsfall, Euroa, Vic.

The list of plants that can have a detrimental affect on animals is extensive, and the range of problems caused by plants includes gastric upsets, blindness, paralysis, convulsions, nervous symptoms, and even death.

Plant poisoning is sometimes cumulative and sometimes the result of a single consumption. Many plants are poisonous at particular times of year or stages of growth. Often, ingestion of a poisonous plant is harmless if it is only a small part of an overall healthy diet. A plant can even be beneficial in small doses and harmful in large. The species of animal, its health, its age and whether or not it is pregnant, lactating or suckling can also influence how it will react to ingestion of any plant. In some cases a lactating mother will graze a plant without any harm, but a reaction might occur in its suckling young or in humans drinking its milk.

It is obvious that the field of plant poisons is extremely complicated and it is impossible to offer definitive advice that will cover all animals and all situations. The following list of some common garden plants and weeds to avoid feeding to

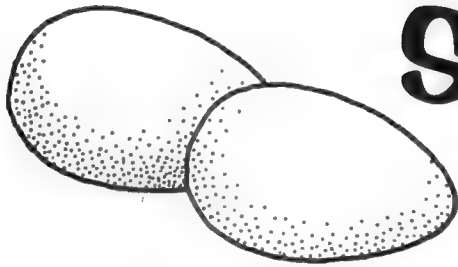
stock, or allowing them to graze on, is nothing but a sensible starting point. Of course, very young animals and those in poor health will have lower resistance to any poisonous plants.

- Australian hollyhock – *Lavatera plebeia*
- azalea and rhododendron – *Rhododendron* spp
- Banks' grevillea – *Grevillea banksii*
- bracken fern – *Pteridium esculentum*
- bulbs – all
- capeweed – *Arctotheca calendula*
- columbine – *Aquilegia vulgaris*
- cycad – *Cycas media*
- dogwood – *Myoporum deserti*
- English yew – *Taxus baccata*
- *Eremophila* spp
- European elder – *Sambucus nigra*
- Flanders poppy – *Papaver rhoeas*
- flatweed – *Hypochoeris radicata*
- foxglove – *Digitalis* spp
- grass tree – *Xanthorrhoea* spp
- hoyo – *Hoya carnosa*
- indigo – *Indigofera linifolia*
- lilac – *Syringa* spp
- macadamia nut – *Macadamia integrifolia*
- native indigo – *Indigofera australis*

- oleander – *Nerium oleander*
- onion grass – *Romulea bulbocodium*
- phalaris – *Phalaris tuberosa*
- photinia – *Photinia* spp
- privet – *Ligustrum* spp
- *Prunus* spp – leaves, twigs and uncooked kernels of peach, plum, apricot, cherry and almond
- *Solanum* spp – including green potato tubers and leafy tops
- silky oak – *Grevillea robusta*
- sugar gum – *Eucalyptus cladocalyx*
- Sydney golden wattle – *Acacia longifolia*
- tomato – *Lycopersicon esculentum*
- wisteria – *Wisteria sinensis*

If you think this list is daunting, it's only a minuscule selection of plants that have the potential to harm your animals, so take care when allowing stock to graze around the garden.

It's not all bad news in the plant world, for articles about plants beneficial to animals see GR 113, 'Plants And Herbs Beneficial To Animals' by Dorothy Creevey; GR 141, 'Herbs For The Herd' from the Australian Herb Society; and Vince Conlan's useful series, 'Fodder Forests', from GR 133 to GR 139 inclusive. 🐾



Sexing Eggs

by Wendy Elliott, Conden, ACT.

An essential ingredient in Australia's rural kitchens has always been a healthy supply of free-range eggs. Understandably, the ratio of hens to roosters was of foremost importance in years gone by when setting eggs under a broody hen. My mum was the expert in the art of sexing poultry eggs in order to hatch a majority of female chickens. These chickens, when fully grown, laid golden-yolked eggs that were a staple in Mum's proud culinary fare.

My parents lived in the arid, rugged, rabbit-infested New England Ranges of NSW. It was here that I grew up and learnt life's important basic lessons. My family tried to make ends meet with skinny, contrary sheep that, according to my father, grew the best fine wool in Australia. Mobs of starved sheep insisted on dying in the ice blizzards of winter or committed suicide en masse in the flooded creeks after shearing time.

But all was not lost; there were always Mum's happy, busy and useful free-range chooks. They were a mongrel crossbreed of all known colours, presided over by a flighty strutting rooster. The chooks lived around the house and sheds and frequently caused Mum to engage in frantic tea towel waving when they ventured into the

vegetable garden. Alarmed squawking, usually in the mid morning, was a signal from a hen announcing the arrival of a fresh egg (or a hawk overhead).

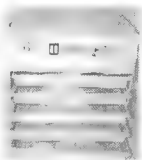
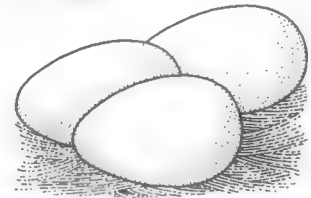
The fowl coop was built onto one side of the empty hay shed. Inside the coop were branches from gum trees, fastened with wire at various heights, to serve as roosts for the chooks when they faithfully 'went to bed' at sunset. In one corner were a few wooden orange crates placed on their sides, lined with dry grass for nests. The coop was securely shut at night to guard against foxes, who were capable of killing all the chooks during a single moonlit visit.

Spring heralded broody hens that stayed in the nests trying to incubate any eggs, 'breaking their hearts wanting to be mothers', as Mum would say. Mum cared tenderly for the broody hens, making them comfortable in private, secluded nests. Mum selected 10 eggs to place under each broody hen. The incubation period of 21 days was then marked on the Dalgety Stock and Station calendar.

Choosing the eggs for incubation was an art handed down the generations by my ancestors. A sewing needle threaded with a long piece of cotton was held over each egg at a certain distance, by Mum's steady hand. If the needle swung in a circle, it was consid-

ered a female egg and was put under the broody hen. If the needle swung backwards and forward over the egg, it was identified as a male egg and became an ingredient for a fluffy sponge cake. Rarely did Mum's selection exercise produce too many male chickens. The colour of the eggshell was also a clue to the colour of the chicken's feathers.

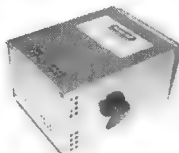
Many years later and halfway around the world in windswept Newfoundland, I engaged Mum's needle and thread chicken egg sexing exercise above my own pregnant belly. The needle swung in a circle, paused, and proceeded to swing backwards and forwards. I didn't believe my findings and concluded that I had lost the old ways. It was confirmed a few months later, by the new revolutionary ultrasound technology, that I was carrying twins. In the spring I delivered my daughter and my son. As I recovered from my labour and the birth of my twins, my mind went back to my rugged mountain homeland, my mum and her chooks. ♀



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The Best Soap In The World

by Bob Rankin, Port Macquarie, NSW.

Readers of *Grass Roots* know that it is far better to make your own essentials than to buy them. You know for sure just what goes into them, anything you make yourself is probably better than what you can buy, and, most of all, whether it is growing your own vegetables or brewing your own beer, you have the satisfaction that comes from doing your own thing. I have always tried to make my own and I reckon the best thing I have ever made is my own soap. For all you lovers of the independent life here is the recipe for the best soap in the world.

- Infuse about 10 fresh-picked paw-paw leaves in 4.5 litres of water by simmering for an hour, then cool and strain.

- Carefully pour two cups (using a large coffee mug for this recipe will give you 55 – 60 100-gram cakes of soap) of



caustic soda into six cups of cold water in a plastic container. Stir slowly to dissolve. Avoid breathing in the fumes. Leave half an hour or so to cool. *Wear rubber gloves and goggles. This stuff burns the skin and is dangerous.*

- Measure 14 cups of coconut oil into a plastic bucket. Slowly and carefully stir the caustic mixture into the oil.

- Keep stirring until the mixture thickens to the consistency of honey, then pour into moulds. You might have

to stir for a couple of hours. You can use any plastic or rubber mould. I use nonstick muffin trays for individual cakes, or perspex to make a long bar, which I cut into 100-gram cakes using a guitar string.

- Leave to solidify overnight then remove from the mould. Allow to air cure for a month before use.

- If you want your soap perfumed, you can add a commercial fragrance at the recommended rate, probably about half to one percent, but this could lead to a reaction in allergic people. For fragrance I like to add pure tea tree oil, which has the added benefit of anti-septic properties.

This soap, unlike any other I've tried, lathers equally well in salt or fresh water and appears to have extraordinary curative properties. I hope this adds a little more joy to your life. ☺

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See You In Tassie

by Sherrian O'Connor, Spreyton, Tas.

Well, we've been here 18 months and we still love it. The distance from family really made itself felt last Christmas, though. Brian's youngest brother died, after three days in a coma. Not unexpected, given his long-term heart condition, but still traumatic. At the same time our new (blue baby) grandson's first op became imperative and he ended up spending Christmas in Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital. Phone and email were working overtime and emotions were tumultuous.

If you are considering the move think really, really carefully about this aspect. Leaving family, friends and support networks is a huge step. Fortunately, our grandson came through his op well and is now thriving, but it was a very heart-tugging time. Email and a digital camera can go a long way to ease the trauma – for us, the cost is well worth it.

A few months after we settled my mother came over. It was a big undertaking on her part as she had been living in a retirement village. Fortunately, she found a great little house just a few minutes down the road and is now very happy she made the move.

The need to build new support networks is a serious consideration. Many people here have known each other since birth and don't actually need newcomers! We have made some friends through the local garden club and my cancer support group, but our main set of friends consists of GR people. A number of fellow 'boat people' contacted us following my earlier articles (GR 155 – 158). We have all met and now form a decent sized social support group, with more in touch by email and on their way. Aren't GR people lovely?

Apart from a few visits to Launceston, we haven't seen much more of the state yet. Another year or so should see us basically set up and then we'll make a few trips. The to-do list just keeps getting longer and sometimes



Sherrian and Brian in the enclosed vegie garden, still loving living in Tassie.

one starts to panic – then the realisation hits: we've only been here 18 months, we've already done heaps, and what's the hurry anyway? We do want to get the bulk of the planting done on the grounds of 'it won't grow if you don't plant it'.

Actually, much to my surprise, most of the stuff I've planted has survived! Our very intensively planted mini-orchard suffered a setback when we were a tad tardy getting the upper level of fencing on. Our sturdy little fruit trees became leafless twigs overnight. Dear possums! The rest of the wire was on in two days. The trees have since re-leafed and we look forward to seeing how they go next season.

We had to resort to a Mark Two vegie garden design – totally enclosed! Many mornings we see wallaby droppings outside the gate where, presumably, they are sitting pondering on how to affect an entry. In practice we didn't actually have enough space to rotate crops (or I'm just not organised enough), so we are now clearing honeysuckle and shiny leaf from future extensions to the area. Carrots, lettuce,

zucchinis, snowpeas, runner beans and a few brassicas have all graced our table. It is such a great feeling to wander up and pick a few lettuce leaves and a tomato for lunch, knowing that they have been grown without harsh chemicals. Unfortunately, a local rat also appreciated the tomatoes! Brian couldn't believe it when he saw him shin up the bird wire and out through the upper level chicken wire. Little, well, rat!

We do delight in the wildlife though, even though it means many of our plants have to be grown under wire. My proposed picking bed is still a long way off. Just as a plant seems to be doing okay some munching marsupial decides it'd make a great snack. I thought the golden oregano was safe, but the locals must have invited a friend with continental tastes. I went out one morning to find it cropped to the ground. At least we don't need a mower for the small amount of grass we have; the wallabies do a very nice job.

Our hazel bushes are in (behind wire) and the newly accessible parts of the bank are gradually being planted

with various hardy species. We have put in a few deciduous trees for autumn colour and added more bulbs to the lovely lot the previous owners had planted. We didn't do so well with our new fuchsias and the possums have been bouncing on the old ones. I've discovered Mexican sage and love its velvety mauve flower spikes and, maybe more importantly, the wildlife seems to ignore it. I'm planting it all over the place.

Another absolute delight here is the birdlife. We can go on about it for hours. An eastern spinebill is feeding in the fuchsia outside the window as I write. We also see blue wrens, numerous honey-eaters, robins, whistlers and wattlebirds; the list keeps growing. We also have heaps of skinks and a number of frogs, including one who keeps turning up in the laundry.

The tree ferns that needed moving before the extension was built are forming a lovely woodland area under our two gum trees. A once bare spot now sports ferns, hellebores and ajuga and a grey water stream. It did have two small azaleas, but something munched on those too! Now I'm trying cupheas.

Between planting, making new paths and painting and furnishing the extension, we have hosted a variety of visitors. My birthday saw eldest son and family and youngest son all come over for a flying visit. Wonderful! Easter brought a full house with seven extras from the mainland for the last two nights of the holiday. We found we could manage a bed or mattress, pillow, doona and polar fleece blanket for everyone. As well, the trestle just fitted



Country life: manure, mulch, and the woodshed with the new gable roof Brian built.

in the dining room so we could all eat together. I love tackling such feats of organisation (just naturally bossy I guess). The hot water supply was a worry, but it held out.

I do miss my gas cooking and hot water. The gas pipes are being laid along the road to Devonport, but we can't see them making it up our hill. I'm gradually getting used to electric cooking. We love our wood heater, it's brilliantly easy to run and very efficient, almost too efficient at times – well, for us, maybe not for our guests! We don't miss mainland heat at all.

Looking at some of the Melbourne forecasts last year we were just so thankful we didn't have to go through another summer with night minimums in the high teens or low twenties. Cold we can take, heat we hate – well, there's a limit to what you can take off.

If you are considering moving to the south island you might like to look into cheaper possibilities for carting goods across the Strait. We paid heaps, but were very happy with the service. We've since heard of a couple of other options. The first involves getting a container dropped at your place, packing it yourself, then having it picked up. Alternatively, you can hire a van and pay a friend's return fare; the friend helps load and unload and then returns the van. Both are worth further inquiry I think.

As with most major life decisions, it's a case of do the homework, gather the info, weigh the pros and cons for your situation, then go for it and don't look back. Nothing is ever perfect, but this comes pretty damn close! Take care everyone, and maybe we'll see you in Tassie! ☺



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Homemade Deodorants

by Jim Berridge, Ferryden Park, SA.



Many people were kind enough to respond to my plea in GR 156 for an effective homemade deodorant and I thought other readers would be interested in the results of my research.

Deodorants seem to fall into nine main categories:

- Aluminum/alum-based compounds: These work by closing the pores to reduce sweating, obviously not a healthy choice, and yet almost universally used by the commercial manufacturers.

- Carbonates: The combination of magnesium and calcium carbonates has been around for centuries as the active ingredients of talcum. Reasonably effective and mostly harmless.

- Bicarb/baking powder mixtures: These are quite effective, but tend to cause rashes if used daily. Interestingly, some people aren't affected.

- Boracic powder: Commonly used for feet, but can be used for underarms as well. Unfortunately, subject to the same problems as bicarb, although, as with bicarb, there may be some people unaffected.

- Roll-ons: The homemade ones, like the commercial products, tend to have a clogging effect if used often. In

fact, the homemade ones are worse!

- Vinegar-based splash-ons: These work for a few hours, are cheap and easy to make, and have just one problem – a few people develop skin problems (usually from day one). It seems to be an acidity problem rather than an allergic reaction and settles quickly once the offending stuff has been washed off.

- Alcohol-based deodorants and aftershaves: These have been around for centuries and are surprisingly easy and cheap to make. In this case, homemade is definitely better, especially if you have any sort of skin problem.

- Witch hazel/citrus potions: Most herbal types fall into this group. Many seem to work well, but are not popular because the ingredients can be hard to find. A pity, because they seem to me to be the best compromise.

- Mineral rock crystal (really just an unusual natural form of salt): This one has been used for at least 2000 years and it actually *helps* skin problems and, best of all, it's easy to get, either by mail order or the commercial version in your local chemist shop.

My current thought is that most cases of bad body odour and long-term skin problems have a fungal element. Commercial interests (and doctors) tend to ignore it, simply because they don't know what to do about it. My personal theory is that the reason salt rocks work is because the salt kills the fungus. I have found that tea tree oil added to the clothes wash is also effective (tea tree oil is a known fungicide). I experimented recently with tinea ointment; after all, I know how to control my problem, so all (!) I needed now was the cure (please imagine me making a noise like a lab rat). It worked for three days, then the irritation started . . . and got worse each day until I quit. Oh well, I'll have to try something else.

Before you use any of the ingredients in recipes you might try, particularly the essential oils, it is wise

to put a drop or two on the inside of your forearm, and wait a few minutes. If you get a reaction (red lump or itching), don't use that type of oil! You should also be aware that an allergy can build up over a period of time; eucalyptus oil in particular has a reputation for doing this.

I've found some useful publications (listed beneath article) with numerous recipes for deodorants. Popular ingredients are: alum, borax, lemon juice, orris root powder, calcium carbonate, magnesium carbonate, cornflour, beeswax, cider vinegar, witch hazel and various essential oils including lavender and rosemary.

Some people have had success with straight cider vinegar or straight bicarb soda, but others find they cause rashes, so experiment carefully.

Useful Publications

Heinermans Encyclopedia of Fruits, Vegetables and Herbs, Parker Publishing Company.

Molly Dye's Homemade Lotions and Potions, Griffin Paperbacks, Adelaide.

Household Self-Sufficiency, Jackie French, Aird Books, Melbourne.

The Best of Jackie French, Jackie French.

The Body Bible. ☺

BANISH BODY ODOUR

Some people have found that a diet high in magnesium and zinc, or supplementation with zinc, magnesium, PABA and vitamin B6 helps to control unpleasant body odour.

A pleasant body and foot freshener can be made from:

- 4 drops eucalyptus oil
- 5 drops cypress oil
- 3 drops lime oil
- 3 drops patchouli oil
- 3 drops bergamot oil
- 3 drops neroli oil
- 3 drops lavender oil

Place all essential oils into a 100 ml spray bottle and top up with witch hazel. Shake well before using. ☺

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Easy Weed Control

by Mary Horsfall, Euroa, Vic.

Hate weeds? If you incorporate weed control measures right from the start you will beat the blighters, save your back and have more time to relax in the garden.

Building a log cabin, then laboriously transforming it to bluestone, and maintaining a 40-acre property with extensive gardens for 23 years left both Rodney and me with recurring back problems. Not surprisingly, when we made the move to a double block in a country town and had a new garden to establish, ease of maintenance was a priority; we didn't want to even contemplate the prospect of long hours spent bending or kneeling to weed garden beds.

I've found that a combination of sheet mulching, no-dig beds and constant monitoring to tackle weeds before they become a daunting problem keeps my garden as weed-free as I think necessary. It helps to regard weeds as a free natural resource that makes good mulch or compost material (especially if you remove them before they seed), rather than as an abomination that must be eliminated at all costs.

SHEET MULCHING

The basic technique for sheet mulching is simply to closely mow or brush-cut the area being developed and spread a layer of material that will suffocate the weeds beneath. The base layer of the sheet mulch can be newspaper, cardboard or one of the manufactured weeds mats.

Choose a wind-free day to lay out your chosen material. Newspaper or cardboard can be sat in a wheelbarrow full of water as you work to make them less prone to being wind blown.

Cut a cross-wise hole in the material where plants are to go, fold the corners under, dig into the soil with a trowel, work in any organic fertiliser desired and plant in the normal way. Next, spread a layer of cosmetic mulch on top to cover the whole of the base layer. The cosmetic layer can be wood chips, straw, pebbles, lucerne, bark or any other

mulch you have access to, depending on the type of garden you are creating. A native garden, for example, will look great with a wood chip or leafy mulch, whereas lucerne or pea straw is more appropriate for vegie beds.

Alternatively, if you have already planted an area, sheet mulch can be applied around existing plants. The larger the plants the more awkward this is to do, but it is equally successful in the end.

Sounds easy, doesn't it? Yes, it is easy, but, as with many endeavours, there are some tricks of the trade that can make the difference between smiling success and dismal failure.

Prepare Soil

One of the advantages of sheet mulching is that you avoid digging over a whole bed as is usually recommended when starting a new garden area; this is good for your back and good for the soil. However, your soil might need other treatments in order to ensure your new garden thrives. Clay soil will benefit from the addition of gypsum; acidic soil can be remedied by sprinkling with lime or dolomite; fertility can be improved by scattering blood and bone or other organic fertiliser. Decide if your soil needs any of these treatments, apply them after mowing, water them in well and then spread the base sheet mulch

Plan Watering

It's not essential to decide on your watering system for each bed before mulching, but it can make life easier and prevent the need to remove and replace mulch later. I have two areas of native shrubbery that have been hand-watered weekly through the first summer. My intention is to gradually reduce and eventually eliminate watering in these areas, so I didn't think it was worthwhile to install a permanent

watering system. Unless newspaper and cardboard are thoroughly soaked they can prevent water from reaching the soil, so if you are hand-watering a sheet-mulched area, ensure the hole you cut in the base sheet is large enough to leave a clearance around each plant so water can easily penetrate the soil; a watering moat is also a good idea. The top mulch can be sprinkled over any exposed soil. Note that these areas will allow weed germination, so be vigilant about checking them.

Two more shrubbery areas have had porous hose laid down under the sheet mulch for maximum watering efficiency. Drippers can also be installed under the mulch, but mark where they are for ease of checking and maintenance.

Think Thick

When using newspaper or cardboard, overlap it well and make it thick – at least six newspaper pages thick, ten if you can save enough paper, or two ordinary cardboard cartons. Television and refrigerator boxes are very good. If this layer is too thin, it can decompose (especially in wet weather) before some weeds do, and certainly before the weed seeds that are still in the ground.

Edging

Edging of timber, rocks, bricks or any of a variety of specially manufactured products serves several purposes. It defines the beds from surrounding lawns or paths and contains the mulch in place; sheet mulch can be tucked under it to prevent weeds from adjacent areas from creeping in; if it's dug in a little, it will prevent lawns from impinging on the garden beds; and a firm edging with sheet mulch tucked under it will help prevent blackbirds from ripping up newspaper or cardboard along exposed edges.



Pull And Stifle

There will inevitably be some weeds, either stubborn critters that push through the mulch or blow-in seeds that sprout on top. For stubborn weeds that push through, brush the top mulch layer aside, dig or pull out what you can, place a thicker wad of newspaper or cardboard over the spot and replace the top mulch.

In the case of real pests, such as onion grass that pierces the base mulch very readily and has a hard-to-pull-out bulbous root, persistence is needed. I successfully eradicated onion grass from mulched areas of my previous garden by several applications of thick sheet mulch. If the root system is deprived of photosynthesis, it gradually weakens and decomposes.

Weeds that sprout in the top layer of mulch can usually be dislodged by tickling the fingers between mulch and soil. Any weeds that have already put down roots into the soil beneath the base layer by the time you discover them can often be removed by grasping at the base and pulling gently but firmly. In damp, friable soil the roots often come out very readily; if they don't, stifle the spot as above. Of course, as you remove any weeds, tuck them under the cosmetic layer to decompose and replenish the mulch.

Sheet Mulch Under Pebbles

If using pebbles or similar material, you want to minimise the chances of weeds pushing through the base mulch and spoiling the effect. It's easy enough to brush organic mulches aside to remove recalcitrant weeds, but much trickier if the top mulch is a hard



Top Left: The centre area inside the raised beds was to be sheet mulched.
Top Right: Damp newspapers ready in the barrow and pea straw standing by.
Bottom: A section of well-overlapped paper ready to be covered in pea straw.

material such as pebbles, scoria or tumbled glass. For one thing they are tough on fingernails when you're trying to get a grip on a weed; for another, if the newspaper or cardboard has decomposed, the top material will have started to nestle into the soil and is difficult to move aside to enable you to stifle the weeds.

I used pebbles in two areas of my new garden. In the succulent garden I was very pleased with my recycling effort in using the cardboard packing boxes as a base mulch. Less than a year later the cardboard had largely decomposed and onion weed and oxalis were beginning to grow through the pebbles in some patches. I have used the pull

and stifle method, but, though I'm sure perseverance will prevail, it is a nuisance in this situation.

The second pebbled area has Weed Gunnel® as a base mulch. This is a nonwoven weed mat that is approved for use in organic production. It is said to last from two years, if exposed to the sun, to eight years, if covered by other mulch. It is permeable to allow water and fertilisers to penetrate and breaks down into neutral residues. After a year of use, covered by coarse sand and pebbles, I've found that weeds germinating in the top mulch can penetrate the weed gunnel, but are easily removed. Few weeds have so far pushed their way through the weed gunnel and these few

have been stifled as above. Despite its cost, about \$166 for a 100 by 1.8-metre roll, I consider it a better option for this application than the cardboard has proven to be.

Black Plastic

Black plastic sheeting is not good for the soil, nor is it suitable to be used in any planting situation other than as a very short-term measure, perhaps for solarising an area prior to planting. Where it is useful is as a long-term weed control under paths. I've used it under both wood chip and pebble paths where I have no intention of planting in the foreseeable future.

NO-DIG BEDS

No-dig beds are a natural extension of sheet mulching and are as close to weed-free gardening as you are likely to get without using toxic chemicals. This method has been described many times in GR, most recently in GR 157, so I'll just briefly outline how I have adapted the concept in my new garden.

For the vegie beds and some garden beds I decided the quickest way to go, given the very poor soil I have here, was to import topsoil and build up beds on top of the existing clay. Newspaper sheet mulch was laid down, tucked under red gum sleeper edging in the case of the vegie beds, and the topsoil dumped and spread over it. Sounds easy, but it was actually heavy work.

I spread decomposed cow manure, Dynamic Lifter and compost over the vegie beds to ensure fertility, and raked it in. Plants went into the enriched topsoil and either lucerne hay or pea straw



Solarisation

Any weedy area you wish to make a garden in can be solarised to kill existing weeds and most seeds in the ground. Every set of instructions I've read recommends the use of clear plastic, but a documentary I saw on some organic trials in Tasmania reported a better success rate with black plastic. Solarising is best done in the hottest part of the year.

- Define the area, closely cut weeds and grass, water well. Some recommend fertilising as well to encourage quick, sappy growth of weeds.

- Cover the area with plastic and seal edges well with weights.

- Leave for at least six weeks. By this time high temperatures under the plastic should have killed all weeds and seeds.

- Remove plastic and develop garden in the normal way.

This is far from an exact science: some weed seeds might have survived and temperatures could have risen high enough to kill beneficial microorganisms. Sheet mulch will stifle any weeds and compost will reintroduce beneficial soil biota.

was used as a top mulch. This method has proved to be wonderfully successful. In my first season vegie production was prolific and weeds almost nonexistent.

For general garden beds fertiliser was only added to each planting hole, rather than being spread over all the topsoil, and worked in with a trowel prior to planting. After planting, beds were mulched with sugar cane mulch, pea straw, wood chips or leaf mulch. With some beds I omitted the newspaper sheet mulching under the topsoil and have still, so far, had very few weeds, perhaps the weight of the topsoil and the elimination of light suffocates all but the most vigorous weed species.

A LAYERED DESIGN

My aim is to be almost weed free in the long term, so as well as the methods outlined above, I have designed the garden so that the plants themselves will eventually stifle weed growth. As the native plants grow and spread they will be self-mulching and both their spreading lower branches and the leaf mulch they drop will deprive weed seeds of light and space.

In addition, I have planted in layers, so that taller trees and shrubs have lower shrubs and grasses growing beneath them and these in turn have prostrate and ground cover species spreading around their bases and over the mulch.

Well, that's the theory and so far it's working extremely well, but I'm not averse to the judicious use of the organic weedicide now available if that becomes necessary. ☺



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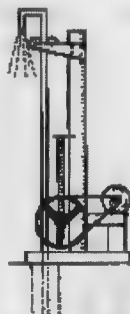
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**J Ogden, RMB 400 (8272)
Wangaratta, Vic 3678.**

Livestock Health and Management

Information You Need but Haven't Known Where to Ask

If you have queries on any type of livestock, send them in and we'll get our panel of experts to research the problem for you. Post them to Livestock Advice Page, Grass Roots, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

With regard to the Feedback letter from Marilyn and George Orr in GR 164 we queried 'roid rage' and had the following response.

ROID RAGE IN DOGS

Roid rage is a hyperaggressive state induced by abnormally high levels of HGH and testosterone (a side effect of steroid use). Our vet thinks it unlikely that our dog's irritability is caused by the cortisone. The way she is now, her quality of life is such that cortisone is our only answer. We need to keep her on high levels of cortisone to give her a chance to heal, but it's a trade-off. The cortisone suppresses her immune system, which stops the allergy, but leaves her open to other diseases, including cancer. Any alternative ideas anyone?

Marilyn & George Orr.

BLIND CHOOKS

I have two problems with chooks. First, I have one four-year-old chook that has gone blind over about a three-month period. She is a Speckled Hungarian (I think). She can see shadows when you get very close, but that's all, otherwise she is normal. Her eyes haven't changed colour and I can't see anything unusual about them. The other fowls have started to attack her

so we keep her separate. Why would she have gone blind?


Second, we had some unusually hot weather in April and all the poultry stopped laying and haven't laid an egg since! Any suggestions on how to encourage them back to laying?

**Karen Long,
MILES 4415.**

How disappointing your hen has become blind. I had a pet blind chook as a youngster and managed to keep her eating and drinking for over a year. Blindness is not a common problem in fowls so diagnosis is difficult. Possible causes include fowl pox where lesions occur on featherless skin on head, legs, feet and vent. They frequently occur on the outside and inside of eyelids, first appearing as pimples, then breaking into a weeping sore that forms a scab and then drops off when healed. Pox in the eyes causes blindness and, because birds can't find their way to water or food, they become weak and perish. Another frequent cause is the ocular form of Marek's disease in which one or both eyes undergo significant changes, for example, the pigment in the eye fades to a grey, or occasionally dark brown, shade and pupils either contract to pinhead size or dilate noticeably. The end result is varying

degrees of impaired or total loss of sight. Poultry infected with coryza, often called the common chook cold or Mycoplasma gallisepticum, part of the chronic respiratory disease complex, suffer swelling of the face and often one eye, very rarely both eyes. If birds recover, blindness in one or both eyes can occur. You may recall if your hen was ill at any time and whether she was affected by one of the disorders mentioned. Her timidity and inability to fend for herself in a flock situation is bound to attract bullying. She could live relatively happily in a small pen where feeder and waterer are large and placed where she can find them. Regularly examine her body condition so you know she is getting adequate nutrition.

Hens lose their appetite in very hot weather and, with a lowered feed intake, laying stops. Your hot spell coincided with the time of year the annual moult occurs, when hens shed their old feathers and regrow new plumage for warmth in the coming winter. The hens will rest over winter, replenishing their calcium supplies, and commence laying when daylight lengthens in late winter. As poultry age output decreases each year, but the actual eggs are usually larger. 🐣



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ECO NEWS

PARTICULATE POLLUTION

Motor vehicles continue to be a major source of atmospheric pollution. Though pollution from carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and lead all decreased over the past 10 years, airborne particles that exacerbate asthma and other respiratory complaints have increased. The finer particles can penetrate the lungs, leading to heart and lung disease. While fuels are cleaner and individual vehicles are emitting less pollutants, the increasing number of vehicles on the road means that total emissions are greater. Other sources of airborne particles include smoke from domestic wood heaters, dust, sea salt and industrial emissions. The National Pollution Inventory allows anyone to access information about the types and amounts of pollution discharged into the environment and can be found at: www.npi.gov.au

LYREBIRDS A MIXED BLESSING

Lyrebirds are thriving in Tasmania; problem is they are not indigenous to the island and could be changing the ecosystem. In the 1930s, with mainland lyrebird numbers being threatened by predation and habitat loss, bird lovers introduced 22 birds over a 15-year period into two areas of Tasmania as insurance against its extinction. Seventy years later, the lyrebird's adaptation to its new home has been so successful that its population of over 8000 is expected to extend the length of the island in the near future. There is no evidence that lyrebirds previously existed in Tasmania and Tasmanian soils had never been exposed to their strong claws that move tonnes of earth each year. Scientists are now concerned that the lyrebird's earth-moving lifestyle could lead to a change in forest species with unknown long-term consequences for Tasmania's forest ecosystems.

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

Sustainable housing is definitely on the national agenda with interesting developments taking place in a number of



Newly built house at The Green, Queensland. Photo by Alan Stewart.

areas. In Victoria a 'green' suburb 20 kilometres north of Melbourne, announced by the State Government in 2001, is at last underway. Now given the name Aurora, the suburb will house about 25,000 people and be energy, water and resource efficient. The 622-hectare estate will have parks and green areas as an integral part of the design. The street layout has been designed both to maximise solar orientation and to encourage pedestrians. The first house and land packages will be available in 2005 when a display village is due to open.

In Queensland a smaller project is underway 26 kilometres south of Brisbane at The Green, a retirement village of small well-designed homes. The prototype homes are energy efficient, built from low environmental impact materials, and have water tanks, grey water recycling, solar panels and energy efficient appliances incorporated. Houses are available in kit form. Residents will have a perpetual lease of their lot. Costs include site 'purchase', weekly rent for the site and the cost of the dwelling. There will be a community hall and many community facilities are planned.

In a slightly different vein, Caulfield Grammar school's Yarra Junction campus, Victoria, has been set up with four eco-cabins in which to house students

undertaking environmental studies. The cabins feature alternative technology, rainwater tanks and solar panels and students have the challenge of living within certain energy and water-use parameters. Lessons learnt and data collected at this campus are integrated into the curriculum at the main campus.

To find out more about Aurora, ph: 131-852, or go to website: www.vicurban.com or www.auroraestate.com.au

To learn more about The Green go to: www.thegreen.com.au, ph: 07-3380-4000.

AMPHIBIAN RESEARCH CENTRE

In July this year a new home for Victoria's Amphibian Research Centre was opened at Werribee. Housing over 10,000 frogs of 40 species, it is the largest collection of native frogs in Australia. Frogs are considered to be indicators of healthy waterways and a healthy environment and are often among the first creatures to suffer as a result of environmental degradation. Frogs are in decline worldwide, partially as a result of global warming. Research carried out at the new centre will help conserve Australia's frogs and may shed light on other aspects of climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria, has released a consultation paper on climate change aimed at encouraging business, industry and the community to consider how climate change could affect them and how they might adapt. The paper, in the form of a booklet titled *Adapting To Climate Change: Enhancing Victoria's Capacity*, discusses the reasons for climate change, likely effects in a range of areas and goals and guiding principles for the future. After a period of community consultation an action plan for Victoria's response to climate change will be drawn up for release in mid 2005.

See the consultation paper at: www.greenhouse.vic.gov.au Find out more on: climate.change@dse.vic.gov.au

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR Readers,

Can anyone tell me of a natural, effective way to get rid of a **TOENAIL FUNGAL INFECTION**? We have tried tea tree oil, but it doesn't seem to be working so far. Anyone else who has dealt with this stubborn infection, I'd appreciate hearing from you.

Jude,

2 Crabapple Ct, BOWRAL 2576.

Hi GR Folks,

I am chasing a few seeds, or information on a supplier, for the **BLUE QUANDONG TREE** (*Elaeocarpus grandis*). I am willing to pay a reasonable price for these, plus postage. Any hints on germination and growing would also be much appreciated. Many thanks.

Iris Tirkkonen,

PO Box 156, MT LARCOM 4695.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for a wonderful magazine, it is certainly one to be recommended. Does anyone have a home remedy to treat a **CAL-CANEAL SPUR** at the Achilles tendon? Any help appreciated.

Joy Spiers,

PO Box 114, LOCK 5633.

Dear GRs,

Each evening as night approaches, the cheeky chirping **SOUNDS OF FROGS** can be heard in our garden. We have created a haven for our unseen night residents by installing a fish pond and many bromeliad plants, the water-catching vessels of which provide refuge dwellings for these tiny creatures. As we sit down each night for dinner, my husband and I are serenaded by their loud chirping songs. It brings smiles to our faces to think that we have created this haven on our own quarter-acre block.

One evening my husband decided to venture out in the dark, torch in hand, to try to spot one of these very noisy creatures, but, of course, each time he approached closer to where the chirping sound was coming from, silence would fall and back he would come inside. Even though he was disappointed that no sighting took place, he was immediately rewarded with another serenade by our unseen friends.

Winter time isn't so bad. While the cold wind howls and the rain keeps us indoors, what better way to have mother nature reward us than by keeping our garden environmentally safe to accommodate nature's tiny wonders?

Carmel Nichol,

12 Pinewood Dve, HASTINGS 3915.

Dear Grass Roots,

Many thanks for forwarding on the info to me from Richard about latex moulds, and a great big thank-you to Richard for taking time to get the information to *Grass Roots*. Many thanks to you all.

Marg Mason,

HOPETOUN 6348.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for your wonderful magazine. A couple of years ago I obtained some orris root from Sandra Burke, C/- Macksville PO, 2447, through *Feedback*. Last year I tried to repay her kindness, but my letter was returned. My hope is that she reads this and recontacts me so I can thank her. I have grown, harvested, dried, shredded and have the root under observation. Three months – no fragrance yet!

Are there any organic/permaculture people near me here on the Gold Coast I could talk with?

John P Sierakowski,

34 Horizon Ave, ASHMORE, GOLD COAST 4215.

Dear Megg & Crew,

Many people ask for ideas and help about where to find advice or learn skills relevant to becoming settled into alternative ways. Is

there a village or place set up where skills can be learnt in an alternative environment? Is there anywhere you can live in that environment for a time? It might be an idea if there could be a listing of where the different skills could be learnt if there isn't a village set up in Australia. For example: garden making, cooking, cheese making, other skills – knitting, sewing etc. I realise this is how a lot of people lived in the past, learning and teaching each other all these handy skills, and it would be still done in remote places.

Sarah Kearney,

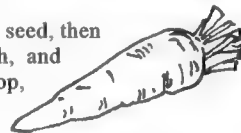
'Kia-ora', LIMBRI 2352.

Dear Megg, Mary & Readers,

I haven't written to GR for a fair while – always too busy trying to keep the weeds down now I've got to do it all by myself. I am 87 now and my husband died three years ago. But I have wonderful neighbours – Eileen Dixon on the west side and Robert Millet over the road. I don't think I could exist if they weren't there for me. Eileen helps prune the fruit trees, mows the nature strip, takes me shopping, posts my books and letters, accompanies me on short tours and arrives with treats now and then. Robert (who I notice has an interesting item, 'Drumming Up Heaps of Compost', in GR 162) is an amazing person, and a real encyclopaedia. When I need a job done that I can't manage, he takes over. We swap garden produce too.

Last year I let one of my parsnips go to seed, then scattered them all over the vegie patch, and were they a flop. Each grew a beautiful top, but the roots only grew to pencil size.

Can anyone tell me what went wrong?



Can anyone tell me what to do to stop the excruciating **PAIN I GET IN MY EARS WHEN I'M UP IN AN AEROPLANE**? I wear plugs and chew gum, but they don't help. In fact, it leaves me deaf for a week or more. I'd appreciate any help.

I no longer write books as I have lost the sight in one eye and have rheumatism in my thumbs. My last one, fourth edition of *At Home With Majorie Bligh*, was finalised last year. I no longer knit, crochet or do craft, which is a blow because I do not like to sit idle.

I'd like to share this recipe with you for a miracle fruit cake that has only three ingredients: soak 1 kilogram mixed fruit in 600 millilitres flavoured coffee milk, overnight. Next day add two cups self-raising flour and stir well. Line a cake tin with Glad Bake and cook for an hour in oven at 160°C.

Majorie Bligh,

163 Madden St, DEVONPORT 7310.

Dear GR Friends,

I am looking for somebody who could help me who lives at or knows about the York Peninsula, SA. I am looking to buy a property in the near future, so I need feedback from GR readers who live there or know the area. If somebody could please let me know, I would much appreciate this. Thanks very much, keep enjoying your GR lifestyles.

B Middleton,

C/- Post Office, QUAAMA 2550.

Dear Grass Roots,

I am writing this letter to get some feedback on alternative areas within NSW. Maleny in Queensland has its reputation for co-ops and alternative movements, however, I am sure that NSW also has its areas where people who have an alternative vision have made their homes. Places such as Bellingen and Nimbin are well known, but are there other places too, which are less well known? I would appreciate any feedback on this question. I wish to do a trip around these areas at some stage, looking to perhaps join the movement.

Christine Smith,

PO Box 188, WILCANIA 2836.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GRs,

On the ABC TV's '7.30 Report' recently there was a segment on **LAUNCESTON'S POLLUTION**, largely caused by the smoke from wood fires. As Launceston lies in the valley of the Tamar River, the smoke is unable to escape. During the winter it adversely affects people with respiratory complaints like asthma and emphysema, as well as the very young and old.

I can smell wood fires around my suburb now winter is here; some have the pleasant smell of burning wood, but many smell like burning soot, which means their chimneys may not have been cleaned. Wood and coal fires are uneconomical heating appliances as most of the heat goes up the chimney, unless it is an extremely well-designed stove (like the famous Aga cooker), the chimney is built properly, and the fire is kept burning through movement of air and not smouldering. Chimneys should be cleaned annually as soot smells and can catch alight.

The news that the Federal Government is giving more support to fossil fuel and less to wind and solar power is bad news for our environment as well as for the pioneers in those industries. I doubt if I shall see the day when most Australian homes are designed for our climate with passive heating and cooling, solar power (no electricity bills), rainwater storage tanks, and facilities to reuse grey water to flush toilets and on gardens and parks. Anyone able to effect those changes will do us all a big service.

Disposing of waste water is easier on acreage, but in the suburbs with small blocks one must be cautious and choose detergents carefully. I am finding it difficult to devise a way of **DIVERTING MY WASH RINSING WATER** to the garden and, aggravatingly, I cannot find a plumber who knows how to connect up a water tank with a diverter to throw off the first flush of dirty water. It is about time all plumbers (especially those working in cities) went back to TAFE for a refresher course in water storage tanks, diverters, reuse of grey water, ag drains, rubble drains and the like.

In 2003 I downsized again from Woonona to Berkeley. **DOWNSIZING** means selling one house and buying a cheaper one in order to have money to live on. The man from whom I bought this house also downsized, but for different reasons. Merv had lived here for 50 years.

After his wife died in 2003 he went travelling and became enamoured of Tasmania, so decided to live there. There were 50 years of accumulated 'memories' here, so nine months later I am still finding things to be disposed of, and gradually

repairing what is a good looking but somewhat rundown house and restoring a neglected garden. The large oak tree in the backyard is a mixed blessing; it is currently shedding its leaves. I am 'camped' in the newer tiled extension at the back of the house, while the original part is still being repaired. The cat finds the holes in the floor (borer damage) most intriguing, the dog doesn't mind where she lives so long as I am there.

At a time of life when most people are putting up their feet, playing bingo and going on bus trips, I am renovating and restoring, joining more garden clubs, and planning what more I will be able to do after my hip replacement in July! We all have hopes and dreams – mine is to build a 100 percent energy efficient dwelling with solar power and efficient water usage. I have left my run a bit late, but one never knows! (I do buy the occasional \$2 lottery ticket!) The Dali Lama is often quoted as saying he wants to be 'useful and happy' – and so should we all!

Penny Ferguson,
BERKELEY 2506.

Email: fergiep4@hotmail.com

Dear GR Readers,

I'm an artist/sculptor and enjoy industrial design, architecture, small-engine mechanics, woodworking and permaculture, and have the need for a big shed to work in and house all of my equipment.

As well as painting, sculpting and gold- and silver-smithing, I'm in the process of developing petrol vapour conversion technology (making engines run on better than 1/10 of normal fuel intake with the addition of hydrogen and oxygen from water). I'm also building my own biodiesel plant from two 200-litre drums and some odds and ends that will convert waste cooking oil into useable clean fuel for diesel engines. I'm working on a lot of other **EARTH-FRIENDLY PROJECTS**, such as a new type of electric power windmill I've designed.

I'm 58 years young, single and prefer it that way, a nondrinker who spent 30 years in the advertising industry as a design-based creative director, which, in the end, drove me right up the wall and turned me into one hell of a sick man. I've spent six years recovering from a dreadful noncontagious illness, during which time I discovered, with the help of a lot of caring people, that I have abilities I never even dreamt I had. All of which seemed to point in one direction – sustainable, self-sufficient, earth-friendly technologies.

My illness and subsequent divorce stripped me of all my past assets and much of what I thought I once cared for, but I've spent my recovery time building up an ability and equipment base to allow me finally to live the way I've always wanted – self-sufficiently in a pragmatic earth-friendly techno manner.

I'm a natural loner, so I don't mind remoteness. I'm almost totally packed in readiness, truck pre hired and ready to go. If any kind GR readers know of a place I can hang my hat and get stuck into re-establishing myself as a real human being, it would be greatly appreciated. I know there's a place out there somewhere waiting for me. See advertisement in Wanted to Rent/Caretake.

Hans Van Vlodrop,
2135 McEwen Rd, KYABRAM 3620.

Dear GR,

I live on a beautiful 1000-acre community 15 minutes out of Kyogle township, side by side with abundant wildlife and beautiful forests. Is there anybody out there, travelling or permanent, with campervan/caravan, interested in exchanging some lawn mowing, bush regeneration, vegie gardening help in return for **A SPACE IN PARADISE?** I could even provide the caravan if you did not have one. I am also needing a house-sitter at the end of the year for three months. All ideas, options considered. Can anybody suggest a low-growing fruit tree – 1.5 metre maximum?

Tori,
C/- 321 Blackhorse Rd, EDEN CREEK 2474.

Dear Grass Roots,

My partner and I are vegetarians. We have recently decided that for health reasons we will eat meat every month or so. One of the key drivers for each of us to be vegetarian in the first place is a passionate concern for animal welfare. As such, we hope to find **CRUELTY-FREE OR TRADITIONAL BUTCHERS** who sell red meat that is not produced in a factory farm. I am hoping that GR readers will be able to point us in the right direction in terms of identifying ethical businesses of this sort in the greater Sydney area.

Damian Doyle,
6/7 Gower St, SUMMER HILL 2130.
Ph: 02-9799-5191.

Contributors and correspondents who want letters or articles returned are requested to include correct postage.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Grass Roots & Readers,

Many greetings from a **FIVE-ACRE FARM** just outside Koo Wee Rup, about an hour's drive south-south-east of Melbourne. We would like to thank GR for providing this invaluable platform to spread good ideas around and share experiences, and also to thank the readers who contribute so much from their own lives.

Having spent much time overseas doing the Lord's work in Scotland and Europe, building shelters for persecuted Christians in Russia and such, we never really found the time to settle down in one place to start saving money for our own home. But now we have an incredible story to tell, the sort usually only heard of in books.

I am a fitter/turner/welder by trade and am trying to build up my own business making wrought iron gates and doing some leather carving; and my wife is quite handy on the sewing machine and a bit of a green thumb.

Last year in December I came upon somebody's beautiful property without a gate (always on the lookout to find someone I can make spectacular gates for) and felt led to go and see the owner to ask him about it. As I stopped at the house, he came out and leant against my ute and we had a good yarn about the economy, and this and that. When I told him that, due to the rising house prices, my wife and I could only hope to find a ruin – a renovator's dream to buy, he turned around, looked me square in the eye and said: 'Well, if you want to do that, I have a 300-acre farm, of which the old house with five acres is set aside, empty and badly neglected for the last few years. If you maintain it and the gardens, I'll let you stay there rent free for a few years.'

Well, that was kind of hard to believe at first, but we had a look at the farm – it was real. The next week I called him and asked if he was fair-dinkum, but he only laughed and said: 'I'm a man of my word; I meant everything I said and if you are prepared to keep your side of the bargain, let's shake hands on it!' So, we started to renovate the house in February, the shed, the water pipes, tank, fences (much of it destroyed by cattle), and bit by bit it is turning into a beautiful, peaceful paradise!

But now comes the hard part (and I wish I had listened to my dad when he rambled on and on about plants and so on). Obviously, we want to become the best stewards we can be, but the learning curve is rather steep. We have no experience in **HOW TO BEST USE THE LAND**. What size area should we put aside for our own vegetables? Should we rather have many free-ranging chooks and buy organic vegetables from the proceeds made from eggs? Should we buy some calves, sell half of them and keep the rest for the freezer? What's the best inexpensive way to fence in goats and sheep? Boy, it never ends. What about goats – milking, making cheese? What about smoking our own meat and making sausages? I reckon we won't live long enough to put all our ideas into practice.

We would like to ask the many readers of GR to send us their best advice regarding livestock, vegetables, energy-saving devices or wind-utilising devices – of the proven kind. We want to know some of the do's and don'ts from your experiences in starting out the journey from dreaming city slicker to organic, self-reliant bushy. Please send your comments to: chris@huntsman-industries.biz (if you visit www.huntsman-industries.biz you can see some of our wrought iron gates, leather art and more), and if some of you have some older GR magazines that could be passed on to us, please send them too.

Chris Shute,
PO Box 212, KOO WEE RUP 3981.

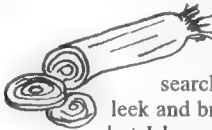
Dear GRs,

At a mature age mid 60s, I am very new to a GR lifestyle, after a major upheaval in my personal life in December 2000 left me alone. My decision was to have a small cottage built on one acre of land, fortunately gifted to me, being a subdivision from my daughter's

property. It hasn't been an easy road, with many decisions to be made. Now my cottage is finished and painted a cheerful yellow with white trim and grey roof, a happy little home with good karma, with the bore and sewage treatment plant installed.

The next decision was what to do with two very **LARGE MOUNDS OF CLAY**. After more wheelbarrow trips than I would like to count, and heaps of mulch, well-rotted straw and horse manure, with some added sand and sawdust, I have a newly established citrus and stone fruit orchard and a small but thriving vegie garden. I recently harvested 30 medium to large Kent variety pumpkins, and also made three kilos of green tomato pickles. Yes! Still picking the last of them, and some ripe ones too, in June.

Marvellous climate here!



Stewed the first of my home-grown quinces and, having planted too much broccoli, searched for a recipe for broccoli soup. Found one for leek and broccoli. Yum yum! I don't freeze fresh broccoli, but I know the soup freezes well. I would dearly love to make contact with some like-minded people – you know the ones, living the GR way. If you live close to my location, it would be a big plus. We could mull over our highs and lows, joys and despairs and swap recipes and excess home-grown product. Here's how to make the leek and broccoli soup. You need 750 grams (or more) of chopped broccoli; 2 medium leeks, sliced; 1 onion, chopped; 2 tablespoons butter or margarine. Place vegetables and butter into a large saucepan and sweat for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add about two litres of stock and cook until vegies are soft. Then blend. When serving, add a swirl of cream.

Gwen Price,
RMB 2170, STRATHMERTON 3641.
Ph: 03-5868-2038.

Dear Grass Roots,

Mum found your magazine at the library and really enjoyed it. I wonder if anyone has a recipe for **VEGETARIAN DOG FOOD** as I would like to change my dog's diet to vegetarian.

Jennica McShane,
25 Moss St, AYR 4807.

Dear Grass Roots Friends,

Many thanks to Eileen Webster of Crookwell who replied to my letter in GR 163 regarding a bag I wanted to buy for my daughter-in-law. My husband, grandson and myself travelled to Crookwell, to Eileen's home, where she had a beautiful lunch ready for us (loved that stained glass pudding).

After lunch we all went to the day care centre at Crookwell hospital, where the people were sitting around doing craft. I was able to purchase just the bag I wanted and the ladies who run the centre showed us all around. I would certainly recommend it to anyone who wants craft items. Everyone was so nice and friendly and we were back in Lithgow at tea time.

Dot Hallam,
18 Bent St, LITHGOW 2790.

Dear GR Readers,

I would like some information please from any **WOMEN WHO HAVE TRAVELLED** our beautiful country in a motorhome **ON THEIR OWN**. I am a lady in my senior years and plan to buy a Toyota Coaster Diesel Motorhome, anything in good order from 1983. I plan to travel no later than November 2004. There is nothing like first-hand information on what to take, not to take, places to go, off-road places. Starting in Queensland, I plan to join a Wanderers' Club for company and safety, so I would love to hear from any of you who have done it or are doing it.

June Hamilton,
2 Utah St, AROONA, CALOUNDRA 4551.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GRs,

Em Martin (writing in GR 162) was worried about a **CAT IN HER GARDEN**. A cat that is not properly fed by its owners can be a problem. Dogs are a worry for cats, but also for birds. There is a range of small alarms – one in the shape of a dog – which, when something moves near it, will sound off a ‘barking dog’ noise. It runs on batteries, so you don’t have to feed it. You could locate it near the place the cat enters from and the noise will unsettle it. Get some friends with dogs to save some dog poo to scatter around and the cat will not like it and will lose its complacency. Movement sensor lights are available in hardware stores and can be positioned as above. Instead of a light bulb in the socket, a cassette tape player can be connected with a tape in it (made by dog owner friends) of barking dogs. Turn the sound up so it frightens the cat away. A garden spray could also be connected – cats hate getting wet. Many hours of fun for you.



Among the voluminous mountains of garbage on TV, there is occasionally a real gem. ABC TV on 24 March 2004 at 8.30pm showed a program that could be the saviour of many **COUNTRIES WITH POOR SOILS**, such as Australia. ‘The Secret of El Dorado’ is a story of how the Arminian people of the upper Amazon Basin of Brazil turned poor unproductive soil into fertile soil, able to reproduce itself, simply, it would seem, by combining wood charcoal with it. Vast areas of habitation and cultivation have been found recently, which would indicate many thousands of ancient people being sustained by agriculture from 1000 BC. The black soil, called *terra preta*, has outperformed the local poor soil plus modern fertilisers by a factor of eight. Our huge exports of woodchips could be better used to make charcoal to enhance our greatly depleted soils in Australia to grow more trees and food crops, and reclaim huge areas of semi-arid lands.

The black soil could be the ‘gold’ that El Dorado promised in the 16th century. Food is more precious than gold if you think about it, and a simple biodynamic soil practice from the past might be a real goldmine for crop farmers. The video or DVD should be available through ABC TV shops and was made by Horizon BBC – TLC. Schools and libraries take special note as this is a valuable story for all Australians, especially the GR club.

Houses can be built quite inexpensively these days with materials and techniques now available to speed up the construction process. In Australia the acceptance of trussed roofs means that the roof can be completed very early in the building process thereby protecting materials and tradespeople from rain, hail and the hot sun, and speeding up the building. Also, with no need for the internal walls to support the roof, the internal walls don’t need to be as costly in time, labour and materials. ‘Boxes’ of melamine-skinned chipboard can be made in a factory. These form room dividers as bookshelves, wardrobes and cupboards and do the job of walls between rooms. No painting, no finishing, no plastering is needed on these, so their price is about the same as a painted gyprok stud wall, and you get the built-in furniture for free.

By reducing building time and doing some jobs off site, various modules can come together much more quickly with mass-produced off-the-shelf items. With trussed roofs, the internal house space is more flexible and the wall modules can be moved if you need change.

When **DESIGNING YOUR HOUSE FOR THE BIG MOVE** to the country, you should realise that you won’t be entertaining with dinner parties on a nightly basis. So downsize your kitchen, especially that water-waster, the dishwasher. A huge stove is not required, but a big fridge and freezer could be, to take advantage of specials and reduce your food shopping trips to town and save petrol.

Depending on your property, you are less likely to need a petrol-guzzling four-wheel drive than many city dwellers might think. A comfortable stationwagon is cheaper to run and usually fills the requirements best.

A large verandah or undercover area, like the shade shelters many schools have now, is a real necessity, allowing many tasks to be carried out in the shade and thus reducing sun damage to you. A verandah or undercover roof is used a lot. A thief-proof shed is a necessity as thieves also live in the bush; keep it locked because word gets around.

A simple frame with a shadecloth roof is another useful item, and not too expensive, to enable the family to have a comfortable rest area. If blowies make your outside shaded area miserable, you can enclose this space by flyscreening.

As I age I realise there are many chemical and hormonal changes taking place and a specific interest in nutrition is recommended by all. To make the most of life, exercise is a must and a good walk every day is worthwhile for both mental and physical wellbeing. Eating vegetables and fruits in season is economical and healthy. Preparing snacks at home is a big saving on eating at restaurants and buying takeaways. Compare the cost per kilogram and you will agree. Usually there will be a beautiful place nearby to eat your snack. This is something many overlook when they get into a restaurant habit. A picnic habit is a lot cheaper and you know what you are eating. Sometimes I will only walk a few metres, clear a space to sit down on and observe the amazing wonders of nature as I eat a snack. It’s very therapeutic, and so close to home I can hear the phone ring, but I won’t answer it as this is my time. **OLD AGE CAN BE FUN**. You have the knowledge and experience to be able to suit yourself and to know that you are really enjoying life more than at any time before. It’s a truly golden era, where meditation and good recollections on an interesting lifetime are a bonus not to be missed.

Roberino,

PO Box 359, WOOLGOOLGA 2456.

Dear Megg,

Further to my article about **CONTROLLING RUSHES**, in GR 162: I should have included to watch out for any seedling rushes that may appear on the cleared area, but they are easily removed with a pick. Wild ducks spread rushes in some instances I think. A couple of years ago I dug a plant out on the apron of a dam and, while putting in my hay crop recently, I found one on the apron of another dam – this is where wild ducks congregate. They either eat the seed or carry it stuck to their feet.

Ray Curtis,

PO Box 263, NARROGIN 6312.

Dear GRs,

As the magazine has been in wedding mode recently, I thought you would be interested in hearing about the **WEDDING OF GR** writer **BETH MONTGOMERY** to Jeffter Ihomana. Beth, resplendent in mauve silk, attended by daughter Jezeloni in pink, reigned over the proceedings with a wide smile. It was a true community event with many of the groups Beth has been a member of participating in a variety of ways to make the day truly memorable for all concerned.

Janice Trenair,

16 Watt St, WONTAGGI 3995.

Congratulations to Beth and Jeffter. All at GR wish them much joy.

Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published.

INDEX NOS 159-164

Each October/November we print an index to the previous six issues to make information easier to access in GR. If you have missed out on any information contained in this index, back copies are available for \$5 each.

See details of how to order on page 82.

KEY

- ♦ article (quarter page or more)
- ✦ reference (referred to in eco news, livestock page, round the marketplace, handy hints)
- * feedback
- ⊙ book

AAAAA

agriculture

- cell grazing for cattle 164:61 ♦
- removing rushes 162:47 ♦
- Sustainable Agriculture 161:73 ⊙
- tropical cover crops
 - annuals 161:67 ♦
 - perennials 160:65 ♦

BBBBB

building

- aluminium window shade 162:71 ✦
- box seat for gardeners 164:32-33 ♦
- building Tallowood School 164:9-11 ♦
- comfortable temporary home while building 164:55-56 ♦
- cyclone-proof house 162:6-8 ♦
- DIY trompe-l'oeil 163:11-12 ♦
- DIY Working With Timber 160:71 ⊙
- ecofriendly decking 161:72 ✦
- ecosmart house manual 161:34 ✦
- ecoSelect timber 161:34 ✦
- fire brick maker 163:39 *
- folk art fence 162:11-12 ♦
- hat and boot stands 163:25-26 ♦
- insulating with milk cartons 162:41 *
- owner builder experience
 - before building 159:27-28 ♦
 - costing 160:61-63 ♦
- permie paradise 163:65-66 ♦
- rammed earth house 163:6-8 ♦
- roughcasting interior walls 162:13 ♦
- stone home work of art 161:13-14 ♦
- stone house in the bush 160:6-8 ♦
- stove fixing advice 159:47 *
- TEKBEAM beams 163:71 ✦
- tool box on wheels 162:63 ♦
- tyre house 161:38 *
- tyre walls update 159:39 *
- wood-fired ovens 163:33 ♦
- X-treme Tape 161:72 ✦

bushfires

- animal care in a bushfire 160:59-60 ♦
- bushfire-proof dwelling 160:28 ♦
- case for hazard reduction burning 159:61 ♦
- don't blame trees 159:59-60 ♦
- Landscape & Building Design for Bushfire Areas 161:73 ⊙

CCCCC

children

- animals in winter 164:49 ✦
- celebrate Christmas 160:49 ✦
- Easter eggs & bunnies 161:49 ✦
- food fit for kids 159:52 ♦
- fruit & vegies 162:49 ✦
- growing a GR girl 161:9-10 ♦
- home safety for littlies 164:56 ♦
- knitting 163:49 ✦
- national parks 159:49 ✦
- Rainy Day Projects 164:49 ⊙
- toys from recycled items 159:11-12 ♦
- travelling with children 160:25 ♦
- Walking With The Seasons in Kakadu 159:49 ⊙
- yoghurt for 162:70 ✦

Christmas

- Aussie Christmas wreath 160:64 ♦
- children's Christmas ideas 160:49 ✦
- DIY gift tags 160:9 ♦
- special Christmas spirit 160:29-30 ♦

community groups

- Manning River Steiner School 160:53-54 ♦

craft/art

- Aussie Christmas wreath 160:64 ♦
- basketry using natural fibres 161:6-8 ♦
- buying & storing fleece 159:32-34 ♦
- DIY gift tags 160:9 ♦
- doilies, what to do with 164:24-25 ♦
- dust off your spinning wheel 162:18 ♦
- lavender
 - bottles 161:21 ♦
 - gifts 160:52 ♦
- nifty knitting 162:61 ♦
- Photography 162:72 ⊙
- pottery kiln in bin of sawdust 164:59 ♦
- rag dolls 160:19-20 ♦
- shoe tidy 161:61 ♦

- shopping bag to make 159:65 ♦
- Solomon Islands crafts 159:9-10 ♦
- tie-dyeing 161:20 ♦
- toys from recycled items 159:11-12 ♦
- woollen slippers to knit 163:37 *
- woolly lifestyle, knitting 163:9-10 ♦

EEEEEE

environment

- ant invasion 161:36 ✦
- Australian Green Home & Garden 162:72 ⊙
- biosolids trials 163:36 ✦
- biodiesel fleet 164:36 ✦
- Bush Heritage progress 160:36 ✦
- cats & dogs in ecovillages 161:55-58 ♦
- climate change 161:36 ✦, 163:36 ✦
- controlling algal blooms 160:36 ✦
- cooling global warming 161:36 ✦
- David Suzuki Collection 162:72 ⊙
- dung beetles 162:16 ♦
- ecofriendly wool growing 159:36 ✦
- ecoSelect timber 161:34 ✦, 162:63 ✦
- eco-smart house 161:34 ✦
- envirofriendly co-housing 164:36 ✦
- failing frog fertility 162:36 ✦
- fauna for flora project 159:70 ✦
- fertiliser impact 159:36 ✦
- firewood strategy, ACT 163:36 ✦
- frog census 159:70 ✦
- garden biodiversity 160:47-48 ♦, 161:25-26 ♦
- glyphosate health warning 164:36 ✦
- green fluorescents 161:36 ✦
- Greeniology 160:70 ⊙
- home energy efficiency standards 162:36 ✦
- hot rocks 160:36 ✦
- increased fuel efficiency 163:36 ✦
- land clearing optimism 159:36 ✦
- landholders funded 159:70 ✦
- Little Things Diary 160:71 ⊙
- microbes eat chemicals 160:36 ✦
- nutrient overload 164:60 ♦
- ocean protection needed 163:36 ✦
- pesticides kill birds 161:24 ✦
- Potatopak 161:72 ✦
- red gums under threat 159:36 ✦
- renewable energy 162:36 ✦
- retrofitted ecohouse 162:36 ✦
- river restoration 159:36 ✦, 164:36 ✦

INDEX NOS 159-164

rock wallaby endangered 159:36 +
 shower head replacement 163:61 +
 soil from waste 161:52 +, 162:10 +
 solar laundromat 162:36 +
 supermarket bag options 162:26 +
 sustainable rangelands 161:36 +
 Thomson River strategy 163:36 +
 threatened flora CD 164:36 +
 threatened species conservation 161:36 +
 Weather 164:72 ⊙
 weed scheme 159:70 +
 wombat species endangered 159:36 +

GGGGG

garden and farm

Australian Green Home Garden 162:72 ⊙
 balcony gardening ideas 162:31 +
 bean fly repellent 162:44 *
 birdbath to make 159:16 +
 butterfly-attracting plants 162:68 +
 cat in the garden 162:32 +
 celery, herb for health 163:54 +
 cell grazing for cattle 164:61-62 +
 chook pen composting 163:26 +
 coffee growing, backyard 161:47-48 +
 coffee slug deterrent 159:64 +
 Colour Guide to Flowering Perennials 160:70 ⊙
 compost drum to make 162:55-58 +
 compost making 163:57-58 +
 cotton growing, backyard 164:16-17 +
 Deep Water Sava 164:71 +
 earthworm advice 161:65-66 +
 Ezyroll Compost Barrel 164:71 +
 Farming in a Small Way 163:72 ⊙
 feijoa growing 164:47 +
 flat bed barrow to make 160:26 +
 Form & Foliage Guide to Shrubs & Trees 160:70 ⊙
 garden biodiversity 160:47-48 +, 161:25-26 +
 Gardening With Roses 161:73 ⊙
 ginger growing in Sydney 159:55-56 +
 grapes in pots 159:22 +
 Growing Aust Native Plants From Seed 164:72 ⊙
 Habitat Garden 160:70 ⊙
 handy trickle repair system 161:53-54 +
 hot pepper spray 159:64 +
 hydroponic setup 161:11-12 +
 indigenous suburban garden 161:15-16 +, 162:19-20 +
 kale growing 159:67-68 +
 lawn harvesting 164:23 +
 Lean Tree Guards 161:72 +
 Mini Greenhouse 160:72 +

mother nature in the garden 163:52 +
 Open Garden Scheme Guide 160:71 ⊙
 Organic Gardening 159:72 ⊙
 Organic Vegie Seeds 164:71 +
 pawpaw
 possum scarer 159:64 +
 selecting & growing 163:14 +
 uses 163:15 +
 pineapples, effortless organic 162:65-66 +
 Portagarden Growbag 160:72 +
 prevent hearing loss on farms 162:69-70 +
 pumpkins, prolific 159:29-31 +
 Resurrection in a Bucket 163:72 ⊙
 rope care & uses 164:33 +
 rose growing affair 159:6-8 +
 rushes, removing 162:47-48 +
 self-sufficiency, amount of land required for 164:44 +
 skim milk powder for tomatoes 161:22 +
 slug & snail bait 159:64 +
 Soil Food Web products 163:71 +
 spring in the vegie patch 159:26 +
 steam weed controller 162:71 +
 sweet potato 164:34 +
 Swimming Pool Testers 164:71 +
 tropical cover crops
 annuals 161:67-68 +
 perennials 160:65-66 +
 tropical organic gardening 164:65-66 +
 Water Tube for plants 161:72 +
 wheelbarrow techniques 162:64 +
 whimsical garden bed to make 160:16 +
 why on earth do gardening? 163:31-32 +
 wilt virus protection 162:68 +
 Wonder Worm Plant Food 162:71 +

HHHHH

handy hints

antioxidant in carrot 159:64 +
 beans for heart 162:34 +
 freezing hints 160:51 +
 ginger storage 159:56 +
 hot pepper spray 159:64 +
 insect repellents and sprays 160:31 +, 163:63 +
 jam making hints 162:26 +
 pistachio benefits 162:34 +
 possum scarer 159:64 +
 pumpkin seeds, heirloom 159:31 +
 reduce refrigeration costs 160:24 +
 slug & snail controls 159:64 +
 smoke alarm safety 163:53 +
 tool hanger 162:68 +

health

apple cider 163:22 +

arthritis 160:44 *
 asbestos alert 164:54 +
 A-Z of Chemicals in the Home 159:72 ⊙
 bananas cure headaches 162:70 +
 bath salts, homemade 160:49 +
 beans for heart 162:34 +
 breast lumps 161:39 +
 celery, herb for health 163:54 +
 first aid for bushwalkers 160:21-24 +
 food fit for kids 159:52 +
 Food Solutions: Irritable Bowel 164:36 ⊙
 fridge, turning off 162:25 +
 gluten-free celebration 160:11-12 +
 hay fever pollen 160:42 +
 head lice remedy 162:39 +
 inflammatory bowel disease 163:46 +
 Janella Purcell's Elixir recipe book 163:72 ⊙
 kidney disease test 162:70 +
 mince safety warning 162:34 +
 noni skin healing 163:37 +
 organic herbal preparations 161:72 +
 Pilates Plus Diet 161:73 ⊙
 pistachio benefits 162:34 +
 potassium power 161:59-60 +
 prevent hearing loss on farms 162:69-70 +
 psoriasis diet 159:40 +
 restless legs 162:70 +
 RSI tips 160:73 +
 soya & cancer 162:70 +
 tick bite experience 164:37 +
 upset stomach cures 161:39 +
 wart cure 162:70 +
 water testing kits 162:71 +
 watertight wound dressing 162:71 +
 winter pampering 162:23-24 +
 Yakult for eczema 162:37 +
 yoghurt for kids 162:70 +

herbs

How Can I Use Herbs in My Daily Life? 159:72 ⊙
 cleaning with herbs 164:18 +
 herbal spreads 164:51 +
 lavender
 bottles 161:21 +
 gifts 160:52 +

KKKKK

kitchen craft/household

Alchemy products 164:71 +
 apple a day, using up a glut 163:21-22 +
 Australian Green Home & Garden 162:72 ⊙
 cleaning with herbs 164:18 +
 Clean Sweep 164:72 ⊙

INDEX NOS 159-164

economical home heating 163:64 ♦
 high filtration vacuum cleaner 160:72 †
 homemade saucepan lid 159:57 ♦
 home safety for littlies 164:56 ♦
 Household Management for Men book 162:72 ☉
 keeping the sun out, window protection 160:31 ♦
 keeping your house cool 160:57 ♦
 keeping warm 163:53 ♦
 Kitchen Scrap Recycler kit 163:71 †
 nettle hair conditioner 163:41 *, 163:43 *
 Organic Cotton Bedding 160:72 †
 outside dunnies, keep sweet 163:24 ♦
 perfume from plants 164:46 ♦
 pot-in-pot fridge 164:43 *
 reduce refrigeration costs 160:24 †
 rose skin care recipes 161:71 ♦
 Salt Crystal Lighting 164:71 †
 sewers, unclogging 161:69-70 ♦
 soap making 164:37 *
 & lye 162:54 ♦
 stove fixing 160:40 *

LLLLL

lifestyle

budgeting tips 162:42 *
 catching up with Cookie 163:63 ♦
 cats & dogs in ecovillages 161:55-58 ♦
 city slicker's guide
 to country camouflage 164:19 ♦
 to real estate speak 162:15-16 ♦
 Complete Book of Self-Sufficiency 163:72 ☉
 country life – plan well 159:63-64 ♦
 ecofriendly lifestyle ideas 159:47 *
 fossicking for fun 162:9-10 ♦
 good old dunny days 163:23-24 ♦
 growing a GR girl 161:9-10 ♦
 house-sitting 161:38 *
 LETS isn't enough 163:47-48 ♦
 living with solar power 159:13-14 ♦
 making friends in the bush 160:55-56 ♦
 mother knows best myths 162:67-68 ♦
 moving to country, tips 160:38 *
 new GR challenge 164:31 ♦
 no point rushing 162:29-30 ♦
 North Deep Creek 159:69-70 ♦
 open road, travelling around Australia
 catching sunsets 161:31-32 ♦
 journey begins 159:15 ♦
 structure for children 160:25 ♦
 possum tale 163:34 ♦
 rose growing affair 159:6-8 ♦
 sheds, every man needs one 164:27-28 ♦
 stone house in the bush 160:6-8

Tassie, another face of 164:48 ♦
 Twelve Principles 160:71 ☉

livestock

alpacas 159:19-20 ♦
 animal care in a bushfire 160:59-60 ♦
 Belted Galloways 160:13 ♦
 profile 160:14 ♦
 Border Leicester sheep 162:59-60 ♦
 cell grazing for cattle 164:61-62 ♦
 donkey feed 159:35 *
 Dorset Horn sheep 160:33-34 ♦
 house cows 161:29-30 ♦, 162:33-34 ♦
 guardian dogs for livestock 162:34 †
 Hampshire Down sheep 161:33-34 ♦
 Jacob sheep, rare 162:35 †
 Lincoln sheep 159:23-24 ♦
 miniature goats 164:52-53 ♦
 pink eye in calves 162:35 †
 sheep know-how 164:29-30 ♦
 Suffolk sheep 163:67-68 ♦
 ticks in calves 164:35 †
 Year of Special Horses 161:73 ☉
 woolly lifestyle with Romney sheep 163:9-10 ♦

MMMMM

motor vehicles

car share scheme 163:12 †
 diesel fuel filter 162:71 †
 ethanol trials 163:12 †
 VW kombi info 162:38 *

PPPPP

pets

bladder stone cure for dogs 162:39 *
 bunny, caring for 164:35 †
 bunny deaths 163:35 †
 cat fleas 163:35 †
 cats & dogs in ecovillages 161:55-58 ♦
 ecofriendly pet enclosures 163:27-29 ♦
 furnishing cat enclosures 164:20-22 ♦
 Healthy Dogs 160:71 ☉
 pet rabbits illegal 159:70 †
 smelly dog remedy 162:41 *
 Starting Out With . . . keeping pets series 159:72 ☉

pests

bean fly repellent 162:44 *
 cat fleas 163:35 †
 cockroach bait 164:41 *
 dog flea repellent 159:46 *
 ear mites in cats & dogs 164:38 *
 flea repellent pillow 163:63 †
 homemade fly spray 160:31 †

insect repellent 160:31 †
 sachet 163:63 †
 legless lizard 161:35 †
 mouse trap bait 161:41 *
 natural fruit fly predator 160:32 ♦
 pawpaw possum scarer 159:64 †
 possum & rabbit repellent 159:45 *
 possum fence 160:38 *
 possum repelling quassia spray 161:40 *
 slug & snail bait 159:64 †
 snakes 161:23-24 ♦
 termites 161:41 *
 chemicals 161:37 *
 deception 161:27-28 ♦
 ticks in calves 164:35 †
 wasp advice 159:37 *
 white-tailed spider bite 161:46 *

poultry

Australorp fowl 161:63 ♦
 bantams, Sebright & Rosecomb 163:55-56 ♦
 chook dome blues 160:27 ♦
 chook keeping tips 163:35 †
 chook pen composting 163:26 ♦
 egg shape & gender 159:35 †
 feeding meat chooks 159:35 †
 helping chicks hatch 160:35 †
 Leghorn fowl 162:21-22 ♦
 exciting chook, Malay/Light Sussex cross 162:53 ♦
 Naked Neck fowl 160:67-68 ♦
 omega 3 eggs 161:35 †
 poultry & snails 161:35 †
 Red jungle fowl 164:12-13 ♦
 scaly leg & Vicks 160:35 †
 Silkie, versatile fowl 159:53-54 ♦
 what's the use of a goose? 163:20 ♦

power alternatives

build a wind turbine 163:59-61 ♦, 164:67-69 ♦
 computers, ecofriendly 159:37 *
 hot water from compost 159:25-26 ♦
 living with solar power 159:13-14 ♦
 Sine Wave Inverter 163:71 †
 Smart Solar Regulator 163:71 †
 Sun Mill solar water pump 159:71 †

RRRRR

recipes/food

baking powder 163:44 *
 cake & scone recipes 162:45 *
 bananas, storing 159:18 ♦
 bread recipes 164:57-58 ♦
 broccoli & cauliflower recipes 163:50 †

INDEX NOS 159-164

burger & patty recipes 164:50 +
 cheesy recipes 161:51-52 •
 chocolate recipes 163:40 *, 163:43 *
 coconut fruit mince slice 160:10 •
 coffee, DIY processing 161:48 •
 crock pot bush pudding 159:66 •
 Don't Buy Wine Without Me 160:70 ⊙
 Egg Book recipes 163:72 ⊙
 food for fit kids 159:52 •
 Freedom Foods Cookbook 160:71 ⊙
 freezing hints 160:51 +
 ginger beer recipes 161:17-18 ♦, 163:45 *
 gingerbread animals 164:49 +
 gluten-free
 celebration 160:11-12 ♦
 flour 162:38 *
 indulgences 163:18 ♦
 zucca 162:24 ♦
 herbal spreads 164:51 •
 Janella Purcell's Elixir recipe book
 163:72 ⊙
 homemade fast food 164:14 ♦
 hot food for cool days 163:51-52 ♦
 lavender bickies 160:52 +
 Lebanese recipes 161:50 ♦
 lemon butter 160:44 *, 161:41 *
 melon jam 162:51-52 ♦
 muesli munchies 164:26 ♦
 nibbles, festive 160:50 ♦
 Organic Maple Syrup 160:72 +
 Parmesan crumbed cutlets 163:49 +
 pear recipes 162:150 +

peasant cooking 159:21 •
 pickled garlic 161:41 *
 preserving peaches 163:41 *
 pumpkin
 as green veg 160:51 ♦
 soup 163:38 *
 soup & pie 162:26 ♦
 soup, jam, wine 162:27-28 ♦
 Rock'n'Roll Vegan 162:72 ⊙
 shortbread 160:49 +
 snack attack food 159:51 ♦
 spring recipes 159:36 ♦
 Stress-Free Foods 159:72 ⊙
 tomatoes, pureed & bottled 162:14 ♦
 vegan carrot cake 162:40 *
 Vegan Cooking for Health 160:70 ⊙
 where to find organics 161:28 ♦
 Worcester sauce 161:42 *
 yoghurt 161:43 *

recycling

Aqua Clarus water treatment system
 159:71 +
 barbecues 161:58 ♦
 homemade eel 159:58 ♦
 papier-mâché building ideas 164:38 *
 recycling Hills Hoist into berry trellis
 164:63-64 ♦
 tin can candle holders 160:58 ♦
 toys from recycled items 159:11-12 ♦
 you can recycle anything 163:69-70 ♦
 warmth from old fabric 163:30 ♦

Wattworks water recycling system
 159:71 +

SSSSS

small business

How to Run a Business From Your
 Kitchen Table 164:72 ⊙
 making muesli magic 164:6-8 ♦
 rose growing affair 159:6-8 ♦

WWWWW

water

Aqua Clarus water treatment system
 159:71 +
 Deep Water Sava 164:71 +
 Rain Reviva water storage bladder
 159:71 +
 top water saving tips 160:17-18 ♦
 water saving devices 159:71 +
 Wattworks water recycling system
 159:71 +

wildlife

biodiversity to encourage 160:47-48 ♦,
 161:25-26 ♦
 endangered 159:36 +, 161:36 +, 164:36 +
 flora for fauna 159:70 +
 frogs 159:70 +, 162:36 +
 native bee info 163:40 *
 nesting boxes for Australian birds
 163:16-17 ♦
 pesticides kill birds 161:24 +

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HOPE HILL COMMUNITY

(FORMERLY THE 'LITTLE PROMISED LAND' COMMUNITY)

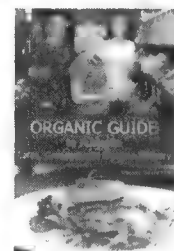
FEEL LOST?

We are quietly living by God's beautiful, timeless laws and commandments in rural Tasmania.

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See page 82 for ordering details.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Hello Everyone,

I first picked up GR in a Newtown newsagency some 19 years ago. I was a country girl at university and very homesick. What a relief to find in the pages of GR other city people who longed to escape to the bush. *Grass Roots* has followed me around Australia ever since.

I grew up on a farm and have to admit that I am sometimes amazed at how little some people know about their livestock. One particular letter in the livestock health column a couple of years ago absolutely floored me. Someone had written in worried that their sheep had **FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE**. I do admire their faith in GR, but while they waited a couple of months for a reply, the said disease (if it was FMD) could have utterly decimated the whole livestock industry in Australia! Please, if you are intending to own livestock and don't know anything about them, buy or borrow a book or talk to someone who knows (neighbours, local Department of Agriculture or equivalent, a vet). Keep reading GR, of course, because it is always a foundation of wonderful information, but if your animals are crook and you're not sure what is wrong, seek help immediately.

In GR 163 there was an article about building a wind turbine. On outback stations **WIND TURBINES** were used to generate 32-volt power which was then stored in batteries. The wind-generated power supplemented the diesel generator. House lights and some appliances were 32 volt before the advent of inverters. These turbines are now lying in the junk pile. From memory, they had three smallish propellers. I'm not sure how efficient they were, but perhaps someone out there knows and maybe they could be resurrected (if you're not prepared to build your own).

Thought I'd also contribute my own bit of recycling (Roberino has probably already done this). I was recently given a tiny poddy lamb. In my lamb raising experience, cold is a major factor in lamb death. As I wasn't prepared to bring him in by the fire, I made him a coat out of one of my partner's holey socks (no darning in this house). I cut the toe out, left the foot of the sock intact to cover the lamb's neck, and slit the leg of the sock to cover his back. Then I sewed on two pieces of elastic to this part of the sock, one to go behind the front legs and one to go in front of the back legs. This resulted in something similar to the coats you can buy for small dogs. The lamb survived and quickly grew out of his recycled coat.

Is anyone else worried about the **OVERUSE OF GROUND WATER** in this dry country of ours? Ground water seems to be used as if it is an infinite resource when it definitely is not. Maybe it's because we can't see the aquifer levels falling that we think we can use as much as we like. I think if you have a bore the water should be used as sparingly as you would your surface water.

And finally, like Lorraine (GR 163), I am also looking for knitted or crocheted **PONCHO PATTERNS**. Perhaps someone could send a pattern in to GR so we can all share. Thanks for a fabulous magazine.

Sandy Armstrong,
'Carrego', GOOLGOWI 2652.
Email: carrego@bigpond.com

Hi All,

Congratulations on such a fantastic magazine. I am a relatively new reader and love finding out the knowledge and opinions of such a diverse range of people; keep it up guys!

I am interested in hearing from anyone who had grown **STEVIA** plants as a **SUGAR SUBSTITUTE**, or anyone who has used stevia products. There appear to be many benefits to using stevia in place of sugar, yet it isn't widely used in Australia. It is used in Japan as a sugar alternative (where aspartame and the like are banned) and in a lesser extent in America and many other countries. Millions of people surely can't be wrong? The only negative

feedback I have heard about stevia is that it suffers industry opposition from existing sugar industry producers. For those interested, some of the benefits include: no calories, antibacterial, noncarcinogenic, antioxidant and it is many times (150 to 300, depending on the growing conditions) sweeter than sugar by volume. These are substantiated claims backed by published Australian government research and private clinical trials. Stevia is also used in diets for those with diabetes or candida because the body processes stevia differently from sugar and the blood sugars do not fluctuate as with sugar. I am also interested in obtaining some stevia seeds. Happy to pay in return.

I have recently moved to a five-acre bushland property with a solar passive home and a lovely permaculture garden. So far I have had reasonable success, of course sharing the produce with the local bandicoots, birds and my three cheeky chickens. I am still working on getting the most out of the permaculture garden and finding seeds to start things off. What is the best way to start from scratch? Are organisations like the **SEED SAVERS** a good way to obtain small amounts of different vegetable and fruit seeds? Would love to hear from anyone who wants to chat about all things GR!

Karen Dorlandt,
PO Box 664, NORTH PERTH 6096.

Email: karen@whitedog.com.au

You'll find additional information about stevia in GR 129, page 56. A possible supplier is: Isabell Shipard, PO Box 66, Nambour 4560. Ph: 07-5441-1101.

Dear Grass Roots,

I am a creative person who is currently turning old, unwanted furniture and household items into new, individual works of art, by mosaicking them. It's recycling at its best!

At the moment I am using beads to cover old lamp bases and vases. What I find in op shops isn't enough to keep up with my demands (as well as the cost - it can become expensive). Are there any readers kind enough to send me any **UNWANTED BEADS, NECKLACES** or similar? Any colour, style, size or amount would be so appreciated. Thank you very much.



Julie,
C/- 6 Stuart Rd, LILYDALE 3140.

Dear Megg & Mary,

Does anyone know of an over 50s or **RETIREMENT VILLAGE** in south-east Queensland that caters for simple-living, nature-loving, organic-gardening nuts? The luxury villages all set in concrete with perfect lawns and prissy garden beds that the inhabitants are not encouraged to touch or pick a flower from give me the horrors. I'd like just a couple of sun-warmed rooms with verandah, energy efficiency and a community garden, and maybe even chooks and ducks.

Helen,
PO Box 1125, BONGAREE 4507.

Dear Megg, Mary & all,

In GR 163 you note that smoke alarms should be replaced after 10 years, but no information concerning their disposal is given. Although smoke alarms using no radioactive materials do exist and have been advertised in GR, many, perhaps most, of those used do contain radioactive materials. Dr Helen Caldicott could perhaps provide the information concerning their use and disposal.

I wonder if any readers have some **ORRIS ROOT** I could plant. Please let me know the cost.

M Campbell,
PO Box 465, SORELL 7172.

Can any readers help with this? Also, disposal of mobile phone batteries.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GRs,

TYRES ARE MY TREASURES. I collected thousands of them from our local tyre people over a two-year period. I have built an arena and a good solid ring with my hoard. Now I have a safe enclosed area to ride and play with my horses. I can even leave the horses in my enclosure to graze.



Jacqui Sandercock,
RMB 2317, QUAIRADING 6383.

Dear GRs,

Thank you very much for an informative and unique magazine. My partner and I have been working/travelling around this country for over a year. Although we are young, I highly recommend everyone to do it, at any stage of their lives. I have a few questions that I hope some readers could help me with. We have decided we are going to settle, for a couple of years, in **WARRNAMBOOL**, due to my partner wanting to do a particular course at uni. As we are originally from Victoria, we'll be close (kind of) to family and friends. I just want to hear from people within that area, like-minded, alternative people. I want to know what it's like to live in Warrnambool. I have been there before and it is very beautiful.

I have been onto the internet looking at rental properties. Unfortunately, I have only found houses in town. We are hoping to find a house or shed out of town with a few acres, but I'm not sure how to go about it, so any advice would be great. If anyone has any thoughts on places we should visit on our way back down south, inland or along the coast, or if you want some visitors, please contact me.

If anyone wants any tips on **TRAVELLING ON A VERY TIGHT BUDGET**, I would be more than happy to share some knowledge. I will reply to every letter or email and look forward to hearing from you all.

Maggie A,
Unit 111 22/24 Lake Weyba Dve, NOOSAVILLE 4566.
Email: jeffmaggs@hotmailcom

Dear Megg,

The old wartime (Dig For Victory) campaign was discussed on the Saturday morning radio program 'The Comfort Zone'. It was, the presenter said, one of the most successful propaganda campaigns of all time. The allotment gardens were extended to include parks and playing fields, pig clubs were started, and goats were kept as well as rabbits and poultry. One slogan I was completely unaware of followed Dig For Victory – Get Fit, Not Fat. The health authorities noted that at the end of the war the population was fitter than ever before, or since, due mainly to sugar rationing and the increased consumption of vegetables and fruits and a very low-fat diet (surely a lesson or two here). Interestingly, even several years after the war food imports were down by over half, due to home production. Rationing continued until well into the 1950s, after that the parks and playing fields were returned to their prewar use.

The program said there is an increasing interest in allotment gardens by younger folk for organic food production. I believe the North Richmond community allotments are doing well, with nearly 100 plots taken up.

Is there anything really new to be said about recycling? Probably not. Still, according to Bell's (Waste Minimisation and Resource Recovery) one-third of **SOLID WASTE GOING INTO LANDFILL IS FROM BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION**

INDUSTRIES. For crafties and junksmiths this is an important and very low-cost or free resource of new materials. From experience, these include timber plywood, fibro, steel, roofing, plastic and Perspex offcuts.

Gaining access to these materials is problematic; waste skips on construction sites are generally out of bounds, due partly to safety concerns, also possible litigation should injuries arise. Again from past experience, these mild injuries are usually splinters and small cuts and bruises, all worth ignoring for such useful and free materials. Occasionally, a direct approach to the site manager proves successful and access is allowed, provided one doesn't get in the way and is quick in removal. It also saves the company a dumping fee. From an environmental viewpoint, it is a great shame that such materials should end up as landfill, where there is often enough generated to supply several theoretical community workshops. Any suggestions from readers how this problem could be solved?

After having the cheapest food in human history, the drawbacks are obvious. Even on a casual wander around a shopping mall will the observer encounter **OVERWEIGHT AND OBESE** individuals. This is ringing alarm bells in health departments, with a potential blowout in costs due to heart disease, orthopaedic and diabetes problems.

The livestock that supplies a substantial part of our cheap food have also paid a price, though of a different kind. They endure an appalling lifestyle. No animal evolved to spend its entire life on concrete floors, as pigs have to do, or be crowded into steel pens where they are unable to follow their natural behaviour by foraging around. The said confinement causes great frustration, resulting in antisocial acts: biting the steel bars and fighting. Sows confined in very narrow stalls for up to 16 weeks are unable to turn around. This is to prevent them crushing piglets, something my father, who did keep pigs in the 1940s and 1950s, found. Often, three to four out of a litter, who simply couldn't get out of the way in time, would be lost. He felt this was life, to be expected, but it's now quite unacceptable in the cost-cutting quest for cheap food. Hens too live an unacceptable, if somewhat longer, life, crowded into wire cages on wire floors, completely opposite to how they evolved – all justified as necessary in getting the cost of eggs down.

Readers, perhaps unaware of these lifestyles, might wonder what the RSPCA is doing about it. Well, nothing, because it's all perfectly legal. A recent 'Four Corners' program on the organisation, although fairly critical, did highlight the problems they face in animal welfare.

The problems with going organic are costs: organic pork is two and one-half times that of factory pork, organic vegetables about double, something many are not prepared to pay. However, a recent radio program from Europe linked ovarian and prostate cancer and the fact that sperm counts have gone down dramatically in many countries. The link could be in pesticide residues consumed over the years; many of which have now been banned, but the damage may have been done years ago. While this might be difficult to prove conclusively, it's a good reason to go organic.

I would like to see truthful labelling. We already have 'free range' or 'barn laid' on cartons, why not 'battery hens', 'organic pork' or 'factory pork'?

Alan Stewart,
12 Weymouth Pl, ALEXANDRA HILLS 4161.

Anonymous letters will not be published, but to avoid unwelcome approaches letter writers may indicate any personal details they would like to be withheld. Please put your preferred contact details at the *bottom* of your letter.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Hi All,

Thanks for your wonderful and inspiring mag. I have been reading for over 10 years and it's finally my time to write in. My husband currently works full time as a computer network architect and I teach Wu Tao the dancing way (a therapy that uses dance, music and meditation – based on traditional Chinese medicine). We have a mortgage, two kids, a dog, a chicken and a much-neglected veggie patch. We are so busy with our lives, juggling it all around, that when we do get any free time, we just want to escape from it all (not reconnect with each other or spirit).



We have finally 'got it', that we have lost touch with what is really important in our lives (and that's not paying off the mortgage). My husband and I feel it is time to let go of the mainstream consumerist lifestyle and reconnect with each other, the kids and this beautiful country of ours. So we are looking at taking the exciting plunge and travelling around Australia next year for a year or so. I have been looking through my old copies of GR and reading about other families writing in asking for information about travelling around Australia and now it's my time to ask for advice on **TRAVELLING AROUND AUSTRALIA WITH THE KIDS (AND DOG?)**. I would love information from anyone who has travelled with kids and any advice at all about travelling with a dog. We are currently unsure if we should travel with our dog or try to find some friends to leave her with. We would much rather take her, but is this a realistic option?

I would especially love some advice on whether we should take a caravan or camp. Our preference is to camp and sleep in the van on rainy nights when we arrive too late to set up camp. Also, any home schooling and cooking tips while travelling would be greatly appreciated, and any advice on the 'should' and 'should not's' to visit and any great parks for the kids to play at. We are coming from Perth and are looking mainly at the east coasts from Tassie to Cairns. We are also thinking about setting up the van with a cappuccino machine and doing the markets as we go. We would love to drop into as many communities as possible and get a deeper understanding of alternative ways of living. We are happy to work in exchange for a space to make camp and it would be great to stay near some families so our kids can have some good playtime. We will register with WWOOF and see how that goes with kids.

I would also like to visit many **ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS** on my travels and document how the school was initially established, what type of schooling method is used and how the children are responding/growing. I would like to make this information available to anyone else who might be interested.

Can't wait to hear back from any of you who have some advice or would like us to drop in on our way through.

Wendy Jasper,

PO Box 71, MUNDARING 6073.

Email: wendyjasper@optusnet.com.au

Hello Dear Grassrooters,

Marlene H has asked for a **BOILED POTATO YEAST RECIPE**, but I send it to Feedback in case someone else is interested. I never have tried it myself though. This is from an old book. Boil two small potatoes, skin and all, in about three cups of water and a pinch of hops. When cooked quite soft, let all cool. Mix into them with the hand two dessertspoons sugar and a small piece of yeast saved from a previous batch, about egg size. Set in a warm place and let rise till next day. Strain into flour with warm water and salt. Knead well and let rise. This makes about six large loaves and is good. Another, not-so-old book has this recipe: 600 millilitres of water in which potatoes have been boiled (not new

potatoes), 1 tablespoon salt, 1 teaspoon sugar, 1 cup hop tea, a little old yeast. Strain the water when lukewarm, add salt and sugar and the hop tea with a little old yeast to start it. Bottle and cork. Keep in a warm place. And there is another one in it: Take two handfuls loose hops, 1 cup brown sugar, 2 tablespoons rice, 2 large floury potatoes, 600 millilitres water. Boil all together for 30 minutes and strain. When lukewarm, mix smoothly with 1 cup of flour and cork tightly. It is the only recipe which seems not to require old yeast to start it.

The bread I make (not the above recipes) rises without oil and never has dropped. I mix organic wholemeal wheat flour, rye flour and normal wheat flour in different proportions, so that I get whiter or darker bread. The only problem is that if the rye content is too high, the dough gets heavier and it does not drop, but it takes much longer to rise.

When I make pizza I even put the dough in the fridge sometimes and it will rise easily when I take it out, after I have kneaded it through again. If I'm in a hurry, I put the dough in the microwave to rise, covering the bowl with a paper towel and warming it for just 15 seconds on high or medium (which depends on your microwave). Let it sit and then again warm for 15 seconds, but not longer otherwise it starts to precook the dough. I always use fresh yeast, which I buy at the delicatessen shop, and that makes a big difference, even the freshness of this fresh yeast is important.

Heidi Macha,

PO Box 2154, ASHGROVE WEST 4060.

Dear Grass Roots,

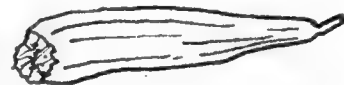
I have just read a copy of GR 163 and am looking forward to reading GR 164. I am a person who likes to **RECYCLE ANYTHING I CAN**. I recycle 200-litre drums. I use one for compost. I throw in all my lawn clippings, veggie scraps, weeds and anything else that will help make up compost. I just make holes in the bottom of the drum so that the water can get out and to let the worms in. In the past I have used a drum as a compost tumbler. I use another drum for firewood, which is next to the BBQ, and another drum near the back door of the house for firewood for the inside fire. I use another drum for a water tank with a 240-litre plastic bin bag inside to catch the water. This is situated under a downpipe. I put a lid on top made of flat iron, with a sieve of flywire to catch the leaves. I have a small ladle to get the water out of the drum. There are many other uses for 200-litre drums instead of throwing them away. I hope this information is helpful to other readers of GR.

Peter Cook,

16 Strickland St, WONGAN HILLS 6603.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for the opportunity to share in such an informative and exciting magazine.



I have recently harvested some **LOOFAH PLANTS** that I grew for the first time this year. They flourished and I have ended up with many loofahs to use in the bath or for washing up. I have heaps of seeds and GR readers are very welcome to have these free of charge. Just send a stamped, self-addressed envelope and I will forward seeds.

For those who don't know, the loofah can be eaten when green. When left to dry on the vine, you peel off the brown casing to reveal a wonderful loofah. Upon shaking, you will find hundreds of seeds fall out. They tend to be expensive at markets, but once you have the seeds the whole experience is free! Plus the bonus of fresh loofahs for your skin and household needs.

Deborah Stephens,

2/9-13 Lonerganne St, GARBUTT, TOWNSVILLE 4814.

FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

I am hoping that someone among your readers may be able to help with tracking down a useful gardening implement, namely a **HOT ROD MARK 3**, made in Birmingham, UK. My parents had a motel in the 1960s and purchased this implement to help keep down the weeds in rocky areas. It is a great idea and helps to keep paving areas clear of weeds too, without the use of poison. If anyone knows anything of this Hot Rod or something similar, I would be grateful to hear of it. It uses kerosene and is like a blowtorch on a long handle.

G Schell,

10/1 Evergood Ct, WESTON 2611.

Dear Megg and all,

Grass Roots has helped my partner and I and two kids on our five acres here in sunny Port Stephens on the east coast of NSW. We are 40 minutes north of Newcastle and five minutes from the huge Stockton Bight sand dunes, surrounded by some national park. Unfortunately, everybody wants to live in paradise with us too, and most people seem to be developers!

Luckily, our land boasts bush that is part of a koala corridor and we see these cute animals all the time. Though, sorry to say, their numbers are dwindling. I would love to write an article for GR about how we started our owner-building-farming venture and the clever and handy ideas we have come up with ourselves or used from GR. We love our farm, our food and cooking and our animals. We would like a cow or a horse, I would like a couple of pigs (to eat?) and some rabbits (same?) one day. Maybe we should finish the house first.

We have the most wonderful recycling centre here adjoining our council garbage tip, though privately run. This is our Sunday family outing and we always come home with a basket or box full of handy goodies. The other week I discovered the perfect treasure! In amongst boxes of old organic gardening magazines I found about 20 old GRs, including the amazing first magazine in perfect condition! Some of the very early mags are great as I have only been reading for about nine very helpful and interesting years. We have become accustomed to the writing, the articles or topics and the people, and to take this huge step back in time was amazing and relaxing too, to see how simple it was all those years ago. We don't have the complete collection, but close to it, and it will always be here to help.

Jodie Breedon,

215 Gan Gan Rd, BOATHARBOUR 2316.

Good luck with the animals Jodie. We'd love to see an article about your experiences.

Dear Megg, Mary & GR Family,

Recently I was sent (thanks Mum and Dad) a promotional pamphlet with the biblically-inspired title 'Welcome to Eden'. In it I found a wealth of information pertaining to an ambitious project currently underway in Cornwall, UK.

The **EDEN PROJECT** started in 1999 when a group of dedicated people took control of a 15-hectare disused China-clay quarry site. Then on 17 March 2001 (and some 86 million pounds later!) the 'Eighth Wonder of The World' was opened. 85,000 tonnes of soil were created on site; 150,000 plants (7000 different species) were propagated and planted; and two of the world's largest greenhouses (known as 'biomes') were built – the largest of which measures 250 metres long, 130 metres wide and 50

metres high! The remainder of the site includes crescent-shaped terraces 'which tell the stories of useful plants that have changed the world and wild plants that could change your future'. The whole project is committed to, and inspired by 'the conviction that the future holds the promise of a better world for all'.

The Eden Project is a registered charitable trust and is described as 'our living theatre of plants and people . . . providing us with a vibrant reminder of our place in nature . . . a demonstration of regeneration and of what people can do once they set their mind to it'.

Sure, many GRs are quietly working away on their own Eden Projects, and in the process are doing their bit in teaching the uninitiated the benefits of sustainable living practices and the regeneration of already degraded living spaces. However, one can't help being inspired by the immense scale of the Cornwall Eden Project. Check it out for yourselves at: www.edenproject.com Let me know what you think, and if anyone is interested in starting something similar right here in Australia, I'd love to hear from you too.

Hello to Dorithi, Lilian, Terri and Laura, and to all the WWOOFers (both hosts and workers). Keep up the great work everyone – less than 12 months now before I can hit the track and thank you all personally for the support you have given me.

Mark Chesterfield,
PO Box 431, ARARAT 3377.

Dear Megg & Staff,

I would like to thank Jose and Don Robinson, through GR, for their many excellent articles over the years, particularly the one on the **TANDEM BMX BIKE** in GR 122. We ended up making one of these ourselves last year and have ridden it on five of the southern Moreton Bay Islands and around the old Brisbane Botanic Gardens, where we overheard some teenage girls saying that the BMX tandem was 'cool'. Although I have written only one article (GR 130), I have been a keen GR reader for over 10 years. Keep up the good work.

Jack Miller,
2850 Old Cleveland Rd, CHANDLER 4155.

Dear Megg & Mary,

I would like to hear from someone who knows where I can buy cacao powder. I think it may be related to cocoa.

A tip for Nada, with **APHIDS ON HER ROSES**. Use two teaspoons of any cheap canola oil to one litre of water and one squirt of dish-washing detergent and shake well. This is also good for mealie bugs.

Mavis,
12 Marlin Way, TIN CAN BAY 4580.

Mavis, cocoa is produced from the beans of the cacao plant.

Dear GR & Readers,

Great publication, love the practical building and living on the land stories, also this Feedback section, a real ripper! My partner and I have been living and teaching in remote NT and are avid readers, eagerly devouring each new issue! It is nearing the time now where we are ready to dive into setting up or moving into a community. We are interested in hearing from others who would be also considering this idea. We are thinking about a multi-share block, mainly bush, close to the coast in south-eastern Oz. We are interested in organics, building, music, the natural environment. Our aim is to develop a community with a shared vision. If anybody has any ideas, feedback, opinions, land for sale, or wishes to join us, then please write.



Rob & Wendy,
C/- 50 O'Grady St, CLIFTON HILL 3087.
Email: madbobbdesigns@hotmail.com

Contributors and correspondents who want letters or articles returned are requested to include correct postage.



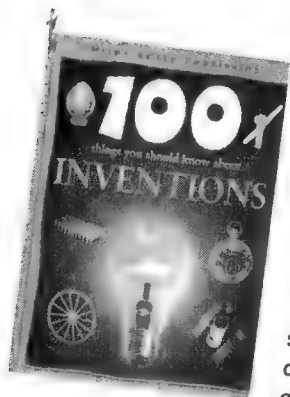
KIDS PAGE INVENTIONS



An invention is the creation of something new - a device, a substance or a process. Some inventions throughout history have dramatically changed the world, such as the wheel, the light bulb and the personal computer. Others just make life a little bit easier such as Velcro and paper clips. Inventions can arise by accident or by careful observation and problem solving. Modern day inventions usually involve a patent, which gives the inventor the sole right to make or sell an invention. A trademark involves the rights for words, sounds, logos, and images relating to a product. It is interesting to note the difference between an invention and a discovery - an invention is the creation of something new and a discovery is something seen for the first time that has already existed.

BOOK REVIEW

100 Things You Should Know About Inventions



By Duncan Brewer

This book will stimulate and satisfy scientifically curious kids. It presents 100 interesting facts about a range of important inventions throughout history and lightens these up with illustrations and some bizarre and comical aspects of some inventions/inventors. It also includes some project suggestions. Suitable for senior primary kids.

H/b, 48pp, Miles Kelly Publishing, distributed by Bookwise International, 174 Cormack Rd, Wingfield, SA. Ph: 08-8268-8222. RRP \$19.95.

RECYCLED INVENTIONS

Many inventions are improvements on something that already exists. Pick some common inventions - pencil, paper clip, plastic bottle. Then think of ways to improve the items to make them more useful or fun.

INVENT SOMETHING

1. Think about something that annoys you and you would like to change or improve to make your life easier or better, maybe something you have that doesn't work well.
2. Prepare a plan or drawing on paper and include descriptions of what your invention is and who, when and how it could be used.
3. Decide on a name and design. List the materials and equipment you need.
4. Experiment with designs and create some models.

WORD SEARCH

Find and circle 14 words related to inventing.

D	O	V	D	E	V	I	C	E	J
I	N	V	E	N	T	O	R	L	N
S	K	X	S	B	R	F	E	E	O
C	M	P	I	N	A	D	A	P	T
O	O	R	G	Q	D	S	T	C	A
V	D	O	N	E	E	D	E	H	L
E	I	D	E	A	M	J	C	A	Z
R	F	U	L	P	A	T	E	N	T
Y	Y	C	J	S	R	M	A	G	N
O	L	T	M	A	K	E	B	E	M

Wordsearch words: inventor, trademark, create, device, adapt, product, modify, patent, design, idea, discovery, need, change, make.

If you or someone you know has invented something and you want to enquire about patents and trademarks contact: IP Australia, Discovery House, 47 Bowes St, Woden, ACT 2606. Ph: 1300-651-010.



IN THE KITCHEN

Can salads be substantial? Megg claims that if a salad is not all leaves, it's not a real salad, but ITK disagrees. Try these meal-sized salads and tell us what you think.

CHICKEN AND MANGO SALAD

- 1 roast chicken
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup orange and mango juice
- 1 cup French dressing
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 lettuce
- 2 mangos
- 1 avocado
- 1 red onion
- 1 punnet cherry tomatoes
- 100 g cashew nuts

Bone chicken and tear meat into pieces. Marinate the pieces in the orange and mango juice, French dressing and balsamic vinegar for 30 minutes. Tear up the lettuce, slice the mango, avocado and onion and mix together with the tomatoes, chicken and marinade in a bowl. Sprinkle with cashew nuts and serve. Serves 4.

ROASTED SWEET POTATO SALAD

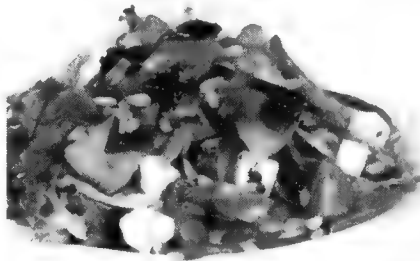
- 400 g sweet potato, peeled
- 4 red capsicums
- 2 tbsp oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped bacon (optional)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pine nuts
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
- 300 g mixed lettuce leaves
- 1 punnet cherry tomatoes
- 1 cucumber, thinly sliced
- 200 g sliced fetta
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- dash of lemon juice

Cut the sweet potato into $\frac{1}{2}$ cm slices. Core then cut the capsicums into large, flat pieces, brush with half the oil and sprinkle with salt. Barbecue or chargrill until tender and golden.

Heat the remaining oil in a pan and lightly fry the bacon pieces and pine nuts for two minutes. Remove and place onto absorbent paper.

Place lettuce leaves, tomatoes, cucumber and fetta in a serving bowl. Combine dressing ingredients and drizzle over salad. Toss gently.

Arrange salad on warm plates, top with grilled capsicum and sweet potato,



pine nuts and bacon pieces and serve immediately. Serves 4.

WARM LAMB SALAD

- 400 g lamb fillets
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 red capsicum
- 400 g rocket
- 1 sml red onion, sliced thinly
- 150 g sundried tomatoes
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup low-fat yogurt
- 2 tbsp fresh mint, coarsely chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp lemon juice

Rub lamb with garlic then cook on a heated, oiled grill or barbecue until browned all over and cooked as desired. Cover, rest lamb a few minutes, then slice thinly.

Quarter capsicum and remove seeds. Roast under grill or in very hot oven, skin-side up, until skin blisters and blackens. Cover capsicum with plastic or paper for 5 minutes, peel away skin and discard. Combine rocket, onion, thinly sliced capsicum, tomato and lamb in large bowl. Whisk dressing ingredients in small bowl until combined and drizzle on salad.

SPICY TUNA SALAD

- 2 hard-boiled eggs
- 1 green capsicum, chopped finely
- 2 tomatoes, seeded, chopped finely
- 4 green onions, chopped finely
- 10 seeded green olives, chopped
- 1 red chilli, seeded, chopped
- 2 tsp fresh mint leaves, chopped
- 185 g can tuna, drained, flaked

- 1 tbsp baby capers, drained
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp caraway seeds
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- lettuce

Shell hard-boiled eggs and slice finely. To make dressing, heat the olive oil in a small pan and add garlic and seeds. Cook, stirring, until fragrant. Stir in lemon juice and vinegar.

Combine eggs with remaining ingredients in medium bowl; drizzle dressing over salad, toss gently to combine. Serve on a bed of lettuce with a wholemeal bread roll or, alternatively, in a pita bread. Serves 4.

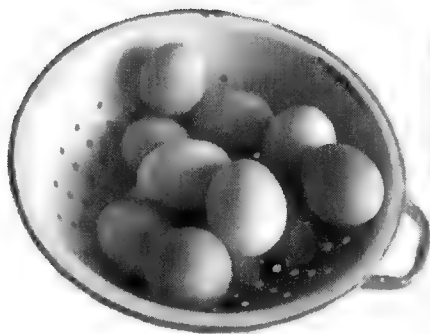
BEETROOT AND FETTA SALAD

- 2 bunches sml beetroots, no stems
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp dried thyme, crushed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 med head endive
- 400 g lettuce mix
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crumbled fetta cheese

Preheat oven to 230° C. Coat beetroots lightly with oil and roast for approximately 45 minutes, or until tender. Allow to cool thoroughly, then peel and dice.

For the dressing, place lemon juice, vinegar, honey, mustard and thyme in a blender. While blender is running, gradually add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place lettuce mix in a salad bowl, pour desired amount of dressing over greens, and toss to coat.

Rinse endive, tear off whole leaves, and pat dry. Arrange 3 leaves on each plate. Divide dressed salad greens among them, and top with diced beets and fetta cheese. Serves 4. ♣



EGG JOY

by Cassandra Turnbull, Kingsholme, Qld.

I dream about having a variety of vegetables growing in straight lines in a nicely organised garden, with beds that are rotated regularly to ensure I have just the right supply of produce all year round . . . But alas, my place is not quite like that.

Some months we have so many tomatoes we are eating tomato everything. The next it's pumpkins and we eat pumpkins till we are pumpkined out. At the moment, it's an oversupply of eggs that we are eating our way through. So, for everyone like me, who hasn't quite got the year-round supply thing happening, here are a few egg-treats.

Individual lemon meringues make yummy snacks. I would like to say that because they are made without pastry they're reduced in fat and that is why I make them. But really, I make them without pastry because it's faster and I'm way too lazy to be bothered making the pastry.

There's no glamour about the individual spinach and ham quiches, but they are quick and easy and are great for taking on picnics or packing into lunch boxes.

Finally, there are the meringue muesli biscuits that are soft and melt-in-the-mouthish and won't last long.

Other things I have made, which use lots of eggs and are just as tasty, are mini meringues made with a squeeze of bush orange or lemon. You can eat these on their own or add a bit of cream on top with some berries for a yummy dessert. What about a real egg custard baked in the crockpot (a favourite of mine) or some old-fashioned lemon butter? I made some with bush oranges and it tasted delicious!

I suppose the list could go on and on until my family is quite egged out and egg-erly anticipating the winter

when the couple of eggs a day are treated like prized possessions. But till then, it's eggs-travagant and egg-joy and egg-citing !

INDIVIDUAL LEMON MERINGUES

Lemon Filling

- 1/2 cup cornflour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup lemon juice (I used bush oranges)
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 4 egg yolks
- 60 g butter

Meringue

- 4 egg whites
- 1/2 cup white sugar

Preheat oven to 180° C. Into a saucepan put cornflour and sugar. Over a medium-heat hotplate add lemon juice and water little by little, stirring between additions. Stir continuously until mixture thickens, then remove from heat, but keep stirring until mixture is a smooth, thick paste. When mixture has cooled a little, add the egg yolk and butter. If you add the eggs too soon, while the mixture is too hot, you will end up with cooked lumps of egg through your lemon filling – not really nice. But you need the mixture to still be hot enough to melt the butter. Now mix, mix, mix and then leave the lemon filling to cool while you get the meringue ready.

The meringue is so easy it's amazing; the only time it didn't work for me was once when I used wet beaters. So, as long as all your utensils start out dry, you should be right.

Into a bowl put the saved egg whites. Beat with a mixer until mixture changes consistency and forms soft peaks. Keep mixing with your electric mixer while slowly adding the sugar. When all the sugar is added, beat mixture again until sugar is dissolved.

To put it together you need a large muffin pan with 12 holes and some

large muffin paper cases. Put the paper cases into the muffin pan. Spoon in the lemon filling and then spoon the meringue over the top. If you are very neat (which I generally am not!), your pan will just need a wipe down after use and then it can go straight back into the cupboard.

Bake for about 10 minutes or until the meringue turns nice and golden on top. Eat with a spoon. Yum! Makes 12.

MINI SPINACH AND HAM QUICHES

- 10 eggs
- 1/2 cups milk or equivalent
- ham or cooked bacon (enough to put a little into the bottom of 12 muffin cases), diced
- 1 small bunch spinach (or silver-beet), boiled, drained and chopped
- 12 small cubes cheese
- 12 small sprigs of parsley

Now, this is easy. Preheat oven to 180° C. Put muffin paper cases into muffin tray. Put bits of ham or bacon in the bottom of each paper case.

Into a bowl put the eggs and milk and mix well. Pour this mixture over the ham in the individual muffin cases. Divide cooked and chopped spinach between the 12 muffin cases, pushing





the spinach well into the egg mixture to make sure the leaves are covered in egg. Drop one cube of cheese into each quiche and put a little sprig of parsley on top to finish off before putting them into the oven.

Cook for about 30 minutes or until quiches are cooked through and golden brown on top. Makes 12.

MERINGUE MUESLI BISCUITS

- 1 lge egg white
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1/4 tsp salt

1 1/2 cups fruity nutty cornflaky breakfast cereal (anything really that has a cornflake and fruit mixture)

Preheat oven to 190°C. In a bowl beat egg white till stiff peaks form, then slowly add sugar while still beating the mixture. Beat in the vanilla and salt and beat on high until mixture is lovely and stiff and all sugar has dissolved.

Put mixer away and add the cornflaky breakfast cereal and mix it in with a spoon. Be careful not to be too rough doing this bit. You just want the mixture to cover all the flakes, not the flakes to become a mash of mush. Mix gently.

Line a tray with foil. Place spoonfuls of mixture onto the tray and flatten them down a little, but not too much. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes or until meringues change colour and look dry. Let them cool on the tray for another 10 – 12 minutes before removing from the foil. If you don't wait for your biscuits to cool down, they'll fall apart – but are still just as tasty. Makes 6 large or 9 smaller biscuits.

I can't resist – I have to include at least one egg joke.

What happens to an egg when you tell it a joke? It cracks up! ☺

Pickled Eggs

Got an abundance of eggs? Pickling eggs is an excellent way of keeping them, and they are great in salads with cold meat. They also keep for many years.

- 12 eggs
- 900ml malt vinegar or white distilled malt vinegar
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp white peppercorns
- 1 tbsp allspice
- piece fresh ginger

Boil the eggs for 10 minutes, then leave to cool in cold water. Shell. Simmer the vinegar with other ingredients for 10 minutes. Leave to go cold. Pack the eggs into a wide-mouthed jar and pour over the vinegar, which can be strained or used complete with the spices. Cover and store. The eggs can be eaten after one month.

Dawn Judkins ☺



Drying Eggs

Anyone who has bought dehydrated eggs from a camping supply store or similar outlet knows how useful, though expensive, this product is. Using this simple method to dry your own eggs enables you to make the most of the spring egg glut, save some money and have eggs available year round, whether it's to take on a camping holiday or to use in the home kitchen.

- Combine several eggs in a large mixing bowl and beat them until the mixture is light. Remember how many eggs you used – you will need this information later.

- Pour the beaten eggs onto a flexible biscuit tray in a thin layer and dry in a warm oven, or use a food dehydrator if you have one.

- When eggs are dry, break into pieces and grind into a powder.

- Weigh the powder and divide it by the number of eggs you dried. Take note of this amount because this is how much powder you need to use in a recipe to replace a single egg.

- Store the powder in a dry airtight container, vacuum seal it if you can. On the container write the weight of powder needed to replace a single egg so you can use this amount whenever necessary.

This powder can be stored for many years; I have successfully used dried egg that had been stored for over five years. You can also powder just the yolks or just the whites by separating the eggs and drying in the same manner as described above.

Peter Crawley ☺



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The Hoarding Habit

by Vicki Judd, Boronia, Vic.

I saw Megg's comments in Gumnut Gossip, GR 162, on recycling and hoarding and decided to come clean about my hoarding habit. I've had to severely cut back on what I accumulate to try to use up what I've already got.

CRAFTY SCRAPS

I've got a six-litre storage box full of lace, ribbons, buttons, eyes, silk flowers, sea grass baskets, boxes, yarns for knitting, fabric scraps, Christmas pictures and so much more it's overflowing into a second box. I'm working flat out knitting toys, hats, scarves, tea cosies, hot-water bottle covers, gloves and coat hanger covers with lace knitted in; crocheting blanket squares; decorating baskets with lace, ribbons and flowers; painting and decorating papier-mâché boxes with lace, flowers, beads and shells (a lot of these come from op shop necklaces); and creating all sorts of crafty things for my family, gifts and market stall. No matter how hard I work the box never seems to get any emptier due to frequent finds in op shops and craft warehouses.

A lot of odd bits of fabric, lace, ribbon and braid, including bits from old clothes and favourite things, will be turned into crazy patchwork quilts over time. I've seen one called a quilt of memories made from lace and fabrics from the maker's wedding dress, her children's christening robes, great

granny's old handmade lace doilies and treasured bits and pieces. It was stunning.

MASSES OF PAPER

I've got old school newsletters, envelopes, some junk mail (if on computer-quality paper), letters (once answered), brown paper and tissue used to wrap gifts or delicate items. It's all ready to be turned into handmade paper using the two moulds and deckles I found in an op shop for \$6 the pair! Using the paper up is on my goal list for this year – let's see if I can fit it in.

JARS

Some jars, I must confess, I put out in the recycle bin (the ones with plastic lids, mostly), but most end up in my cupboards ready to be used for storing dry goods in the pantry, or to be filled with homemade jams, marmalades, jellies, chutneys, lemon butter, berries in muscat and whatever else I find to use them for.

Bottles are used for skim milk (I use powdered skim milk for everything), filtered water, flavoured oils and vinegars, herbal vinegars, syrups and

cordials, home brew and liqueurs, and sauces of course.

TAKE-AWAY CONTAINERS

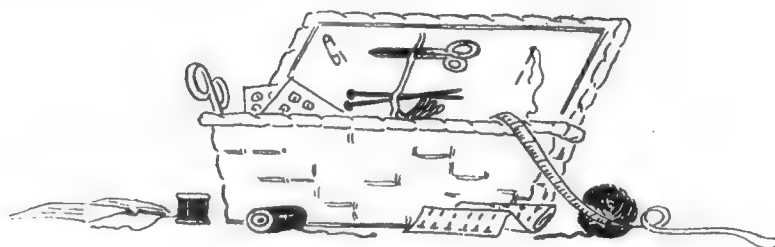
I use the humble take-away containers to freeze leftovers, or I cook extra soups, stews and casseroles and freeze them. The little containers that sweet and sour sauce comes in are fabulous for storing pins, little wiggly eyes for toys, sleigh bells, beads and other craft supplies that are tiny.

TOWELS

Old towels and cotton rags are used as dishcloths, cleaning cloths, couching cloths for paper making and, once they are beyond that, they end up in the compost bin, cut into small pieces.

MAKING ROOM FOR MORE

I could probably come up with more, but for now that's heaps. I'm going to be flat out using up what I've already got so I can make room for more stuff in my cupboards and craft boxes. At least I can say I've got two of my big craft boxes full of finished projects; now to finish several others and get started on more. ♪



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Tracks Ahead

by Neville Jackson, Valhalla.

Here on 'Shangri la' we have designed tracks around the property to provide reliable access with minimal impact to our vehicle and the environment. We have a neighbour who parks a car near his entrance gate and walks in a kilometre to his home every time a decent rain falls. But just a few simple procedures carried out through the year ensure our tracks are all-weather, always.

Before we originally decided upon a house site we searched our kilometre-long frontage for a water divide. This is where rainwater runoff naturally drains off in both directions from higher ground. Not every property will have such an asset, but it's well worth the search.

Next, we walked out several likely routes to the best house sites. These routes had to conform to certain requirements: ease of maintenance, no gullies or continually wet or boggy areas, no rocky ridges or heavily timbered areas – such places are difficult to maintain. Good access to us means all-year reliable tracks with minimal maintenance. Washouts do not occur if the tracks are well placed.

WET-WEATHER TRACKS

Most times wet or boggy sections can be avoided by wending a way around hills or rises. If wet areas cannot be rocked over or circumvented, then corduroy may be the answer. This consists of regrowth saplings laid close together and wired to each other, then gravel in-filled to form a trafficable mat. When we first lived on 'Camelot', a

previous property, we had to negotiate a 20-metre stretch of sandy track adjacent to a watercourse that deteriorated into a bog whenever it rained.

The time-honoured method to navigate such problem areas was to lay sections of corduroy. The advantage of this system is that water moves freely between the saplings and permits the track to dry out. However, we had a singular lack of suitable regrowth saplings and besides, there had to be a better way than to destroy so many young trees.

After a think, we decided to try old car tyres instead. These we obtained for free, as many as needed, from tyre retreaders and garages. The larger sizes, from trucks and small tractors, went in the deepest, wettest areas and graded down to car tyres at the approaches. All tyres were tied together with fencing wire to form a rectangular mat and finally double-wired at each corner to handily sited tree stumps. The wire was secured into a saw cut made in the stump to prevent slippage. This, we hoped, would prevent the whole assemblage from being taken sideways by the next flooding rain.

We filled our trailer many times with stones and gravel then backed to the tyres, which we then filled, taking care to pack the inside rim of the tyres. At the end of the day we had an all-weather track (hope, hope). A little slow and bumpy perhaps, but better than a bogged vehicle.

Some time after completion a 'hundred-year flood' inundated the area. The crossing sustained no damage; in

fact, with a skin of silt on top it became better. Our neighbours were immobilised on their properties for a fortnight, even with four-wheel-drive vehicles. Our old Ford station wagon had no trouble negotiating our good access roads.

WINDING TRACKS

Tracks need not be straight from gate to dwelling. In fact, it is far better visually if access trails wind slightly. Another disadvantage of direct A to B tracks is that cold winter winds naturally follow straight roads right up to the dwelling. A property nearby has eliminated all tree cover on the direct track to the home and consequently loses sorely needed warmth around the home area in windy times and during winter.

If tracks can also be along fence-lines, or to dams, tanks and firewood collection areas, this has the advantage of saving time and fuel and fits nicely into our philosophy of performing several jobs with one effort.

RING ROADS

The most worthwhile aspect of our road design is the ring roads. Around the house, garage, outbuildings, orchard and vineyard we have a perimeter ring road, which doubles as a firebreak. Tracks through the middle of this area transport trailer loads of manure in and produce out. This gives us access to all working areas without needing to reverse a vehicle, a common source of accidents and damage on properties.

When an old tree leaned dangerously over a ring road and blocked that track for a week before being cut into firewood, there was no problem because we had alternative access from either side.

Further out, other rings encircle dams, firewood sources and building materials such as timber, stone and mudbrick subsoil. These ring roads also provide fire trails if needed for bushfire safety or small-area cool burns to reduce dangerous build-ups of fuel. Several diagonal tracks give alternative access and segment the area. These many tracks are similar in plan to segments of a cut orange (see drawing).

GOOD GATEWAYS

Any gateway should be wide enough to allow passage of wide loads, such as concrete tanks or heavy equipment. An easier and cheaper way to achieve this is to offset the gateway inwards from the fence line (see diagram). This also permits long-load incoming vehicles to turn and be safely off the main road. One four-metre gate is cheaper than two two-metre gates and a lot quicker to open. Gates should be aligned so they open both ways with a stop/hold each side for lone drivers. If double or single gates are installed and hinges are slightly off vertical, the gate will naturally close or stay open as required. For safety we prepare a vehicle plus trailer length clearance on level ground both sides of the main gateway, with the entrance set well in from the fenceline so vehicles are off the main road.

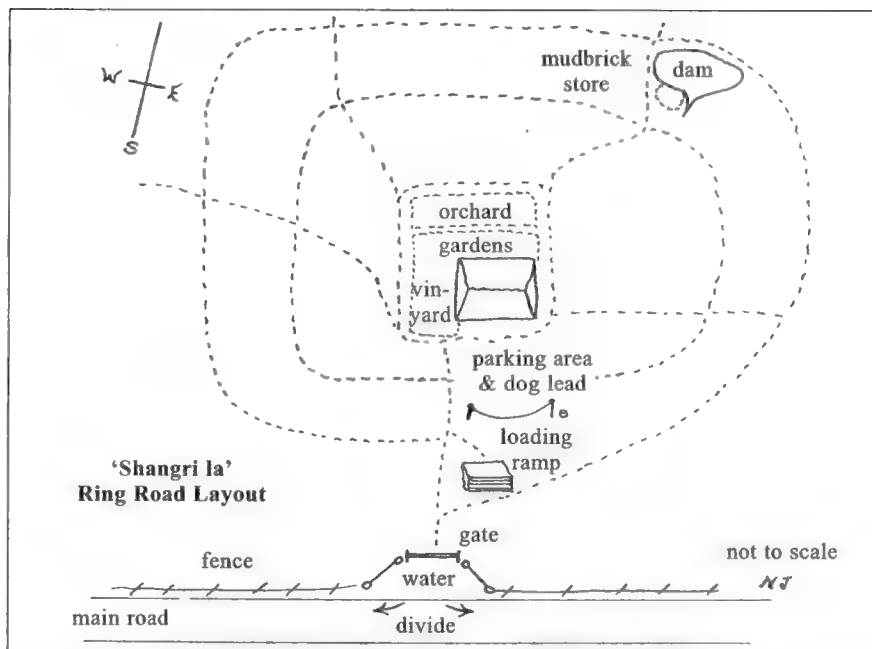
GETTING THE MAIL

Postal contractors require that mailboxes are easy to access. Guidelines are available from post offices.

On our walks to the mailbox, track debris is placed against nearby stumps to reduce under-vehicle wiring damage. These sticks eventually build up around the stump and hasten elimination during control burn-offs. On our walks we also carry light rods about a metre long to flick small sticks off our roads – more of our multiple jobs for one effort.

WIDE LOAD

We fully utilise the width of all of our tracks when driving so ruts do not form or create a high centre ridge that 'bot-toms' lower slung cars. To maintain



this width road verges are cleared away or mown occasionally. Reflectors are fastened to any track hazard, such as stumps or rocks that just cannot be removed. When a track diverges off the main access an indicator is provided to direct traffic along the main road. If rainwater runoff invades the road, we use gravel and subsoil to form speed bumps diagonally across the track. This not only leads water runoff quickly away, but also ensures traffic slows down and so maintains nondestructive usage. Small stones, gravel and subsoil or ant heap soil are stored in bins and emptied into low areas of the tracks whenever we travel around the property. No extra work is then entailed for a constantly maintained access.

A loading ramp is essential for a property. It should be planned for in the initial road design and accessible from the main track entrance (see diagram).

PARKING

Near our home we have a cleared parking area for visitors under safe shade trees and with its own ring road. This is a good place for trailer storage, having level ground to safely manoeuvre. It is used as a quarantine spot to ensure any mud with contained weed seeds on visitors' shoes and car wheels are dropped there and weeds can be seen and removed if they germinate.

Nearby, a running lead and water

bowl keep visitors' dogs happy and our wildlife safe and undisturbed. We aim for a pristine environment with plentiful native flora and fauna and seek to keep it that way.

THINKING AHEAD

After ring tracks near the home are mown, kangaroos and wallabies hop about to savour the new green pick and keep our access tracks cropped and tidy. Track mowing is only infrequently required.

At dams and attractive bush spots we build barbecues and bush seating of stumps and logs. These areas usually have their own ring roads.

Where a dead end is inevitable a turn-around is provided. It's easier to use and far safer than backing and filling, especially with a trailer load of firewood.

At home we keep an updated mud map of our property tracks. This helps when we plan future extensions to assets and bushfire control.

Most property tracks are considered just something to travel on to and from the home area. Ours are part of a management strategy to maintain all-weather traffic and to provide a safe effective access.

Make life on the land easier by planning ahead for safe tracks. With occasional maintenance and a little help from your local macropods, tracks will always be there to afford good access. ☺

A Deadly Disease

Of the many diseases that affect livestock, botulism is one that strikes suddenly, with deadly results! You can, however, do much to eliminate its occurrence through vigilance and strict sanitation.

BEWARE BOTULISM

by June Birkett, Crystal Creek, NSW.

Two dead cattle carcasses were lying in the paddock and I sighed a long sigh. The drought had worsened, feed was short and feed poisoning had become a real threat to the herd. We'd lost three cattle a couple of months earlier and were very conscious of this problem.

The suddenness of the deaths pointed to botulism as the culprit so we needed to examine the feed. Botulism is caused by animals eating food contaminated with the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*, which is similar in character to other clostridium species such as those causing tetanus, black leg and pulpy kidney. All these conditions are extremely prevalent in coastal areas. They live in low-oxygen environments and are capable of forming spores. These deadly spores are highly resistant forms of bacteria that survive under extreme conditions such as those encountered during a drought.

Botulism thrives in rotting animal or plant wastes. We live in an area where there is a very large wild duck population. Ducks often die from eating the toxic algae seen so frequently in receding dams and creeks. The herd can become infected from eating grasses where infected birds lie and rot.

However, hay and silage are the most common sources of infection as rats and mice climb into the silage bales to feed on the grain heads contained within and often die, leaving no signs to draw the farmer's attention. Dairy farmers store a large amount of feed for the winter months so always need to be conscious of checking the silage bales as they are opened and looking for spoilage. Botulism toxins spread throughout the stored bales in



Death by botulism is indicated by the tongue hanging out of both dead animals.

an uneven manner, which makes it more confusing because some cattle become infected and some do not after eating the same fodder.

After infection the signs take 3 – 17 days to manifest. Clinical signs include ascending paralysis, which starts in the hind legs and spreads to all four legs, whereby the animal collapses. The head and neck become weak, saliva drools and the tongue hangs out. The animal eventually dies of respiratory failure.

Sad to say, even with treatment very few animals will survive once clinical signs are recognised. The larger the amount of bacteria ingested the sooner the animal will die. An animal might be found lying on its side one to four days after botulism is recognised, such was the case with our two animals.

There is a vaccine available from vets that will give protection from botulism for 12 – 24 months from one injection. I know of a case where more than 20 cows died from one bad batch of infected dairy meal, although this is quite rare. Infected feed needs to be destroyed, unless the vaccine is given.

Fungi, which can grow on stored feed such as silage, also needs careful attention as a possible cause of animal death. This growth occurs as mould on

feed with high moisture content; the toxins are called mycotoxins and can cause a number of different diseases, with symptoms varying from diarrhoea to nervous signs and photosensitivity.

I knew that unless the silage our animals had eaten was checked we would not know for sure the cause of death. After examination, parts of dead rats were found in the remains of the silage bale.

If you suspect that your animals have been infected with either botulism or mycotoxins, do not delay – contact your vet or the Rural Land Board. I hope this story is a graphic reminder to be more careful of any stored fodder, especially in drought or flood times.

A RISK TO POULTRY

by Megg Miller, Nagambie, Vic.

Botulism isn't only a problem with cattle but can affect wild birds, as already mentioned, along with domestic poultry – waterfowl in particular. The source of the clostridium bacterium is usually maggots that have developed on a rotting carcass infected with this lethal pathogen. Fowls, turkeys and guineas will eat the maggots and any flies present, while waterfowl are more

likely to ingest the pathogen via dead invertebrates or rotting plant material along the edge of creeks or waterways.

Botulism in fowls may be indicated by ruffled feathers or excessively watery droppings. If a large amount of toxin has been ingested, there will be flaccid paralysis of legs and wings, spreading to the neck and even the eyelids. A dying bird will likely be stretched out and perish from respiratory or cardiac paralysis. In turkeys the condition used to be known as limberneck, in reference to the rubbery flaccid appearance of the affected bird's neck.

Death from botulism is probably more common in waterfowl than many people realise. Badly affected birds tend to collapse and drown when in dams or creeks, so symptoms are not as recognisable as in fowls and turkeys. Suspect botulism when sudden deaths occur in healthy duck or goose flocks.

Can you prevent botulism? First, it's not common; many poultry keepers never encounter it. Second, stringent management will greatly reduce its incidence. Carcasses of dead animals or birds should be disposed of or, in the



Waterfowl are particularly at risk.


case of sheep or cattle, dragged as far away as possible from poultry sheds. Fly control is recommended by means of traps set around the farm or yard to reduce the breeding population. If baiting of rodents takes place, checking for the presence of dead bodies should be carried out and carcasses disposed of. These special measures, along with good general management, should ensure this nasty condition doesn't ever appear. ☹

BEWARE HELIOTROPE

Heliotrope is often the only green plant available to sheep in paddocks over summer and autumn, but be aware, it is highly toxic and responsible for numerous sheep deaths. Stressed, hungry or pregnant animals are most at risk. Avoiding putting stock on heliotrope is the best solution, as the plant is almost impossible to eradicate by spraying or working up a fallow, due to the number of seeds it produces. ☹

WEDGIES NOT A PEST

Wedge-tailed eagles are no longer considered a significant threat to agriculture and have been removed from the list of declared animals managed by the Agriculture Protection Board. Eagles play an important role in helping dispose of dead animals and controlling rabbit numbers and, as they are now a protected species, landholders cannot control them without a licence. Any farmers with eagle situations should contact their state's Department of Conservation and Land Management. ☹



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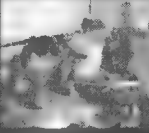
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ECO BABY Nappy Wash Knowhow

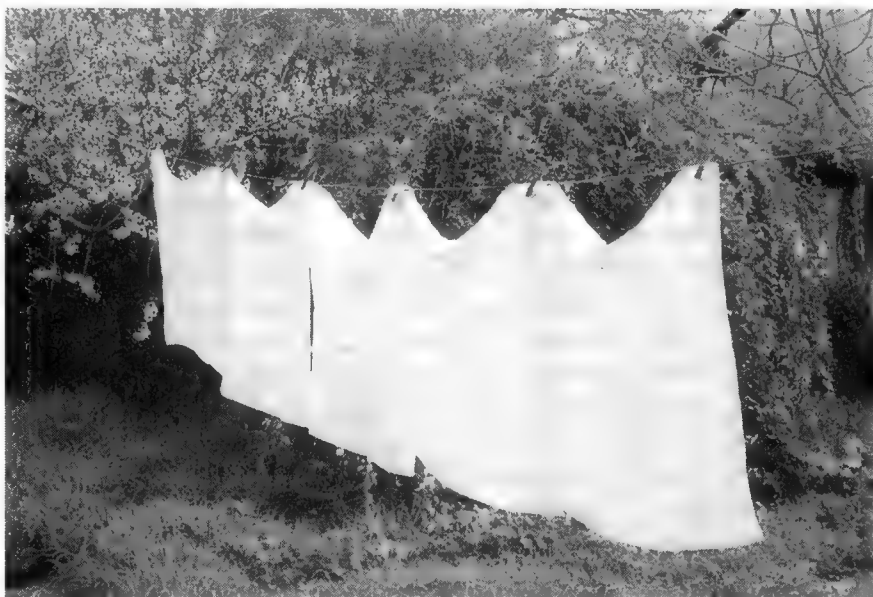
by Leah Johnson, Cranbourne, Vic.

When all the mums around me are putting their bubs in disposable nappies, I was shocked to learn that disposables in landfill could be there still when the new bub that wore them has passed away at a ripe old age. By the time each cute little disposable-nappy-wearing infant has been toilet trained, his or her parents will have sent half a tonne of nappy-plastic garbage to landfill.

I reckon I save heaps of money and help the environment by using cloth nappies. I have read those justifications by the disposable nappy manufacturers claiming that washing cloth nappies wastes water, but environmental groups say that more water is wasted in manufacturing disposables than in washing cloth nappies. I use water from the previous rinse cycle to soak the nappies and either wait until I have a full load before washing or set the water level according to the size of the load, so I reduce the water needed anyway. Please be careful if you reuse washing water on the garden; it is against EPA guidelines to reuse water containing faecal matter.

EASY WASHING METHOD

I soak each day's nappies in a covered bucket overnight in rinsing water from that day's wash. To each bucket of



Cloth nappies drying in the sun: good for bub and for the environment, saves money too.

water I add a heaped tablespoon of borax and a few drops of eucalyptus oil. The next day I machine-wash in hot water. I have read that you can use cold water, but the nappies never seem to be as clean. Is it my machine, or my washing powder, I wonder? Then again, maybe the hot water helps kill any bacteria.

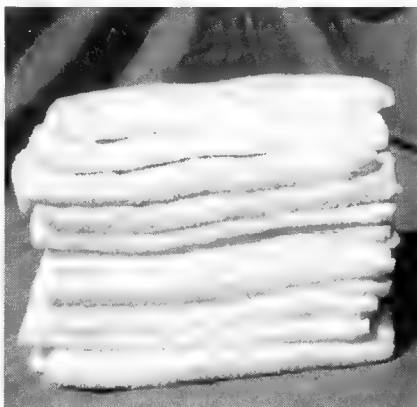
When I remember, I add about a quarter of a cup of white vinegar to the rinsing water to make the nappies feel softer. I have read that vinegar disinfects and deodorises the nappies as well as removing soap residues.

Instead of borax in the soaking water you could use a couple of tablespoons of bicarb soda or some oxygen-based bleach. Chlorine bleaches are not good for the environment, or for bub's tender skin if residues happen to remain in the cloth.

Whenever I can I dry the nappies outside in the sun and wind. If it's raining or very damp, I dry them in the clothes dryer on high heat to kill any

lurking bacteria. Anyone not having a clothes dryer can drape them on a clotheshorse near the combustion fire or over a floor heating duct.

Once I got into a routine, I found it a very simple job and worth it for the money I save and the reduced impact of my precious bub on the environment he'll grow up to enjoy. I'd love it if other GR mums could write about their natural baby care experiences. ♡





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Keeping Baby Dry

by Megg Miller, Nagambie, Vic.

Pip Buchanan has been a colourful presence at Salamanca Market, Hobart, for nearly eight years. Managing a stall provides an opportunity for her to express ecological and ethical beliefs in a hands-on way. Respect for the environment and living sustainably are at the top of her list for a green lifestyle.

The first few years at the market were focused on selling cloth menstrual pads (Moon Pads). Discussions with customers over waste feminine products brought up the parallel with disposable nappies. Pip looked around with a view to making an alternative to disposables and discovered Zappy Nappies. 'I realised they had it all worked out: one size fits all, the design is good, and they are well made by women sewing in their own homes in Australia. I happily became their agent about seven years ago.'

What's a Zappy Nappy you may ask. It's a nifty fitted cloth nappy with a difference. 'One Zappy equals one towelling square. Made from soft cotton flannelette, the Zappy has a fitted design that puts absorbency where it is needed, so it's less bulky than folded cloth nappies. It opens out to dry easily', Pip said. An extra liner can be added at night or for bigger babies when more absorbency is needed. Zappies are produced in one size only, with velcro being adjusted to fit baby from birth to toilet training. The legs in the Zappy are elasticised to reduce leakage. Parents also appreciate the waterproof overpants (pilchers) Pip stocks, made from a breathable non-PVC-coated nylon fabric.

Cost is always a consideration with new families. How does the Zappy system compare with towelling squares? Pip says the cost to buy and wash Zappies over two and a half years works out at a little over \$600, very similar to the costs involved with towelling squares. A little under two-thirds of this cost goes on buying the Zappies, which families can count on still being in good condition for their

next baby. Disposables, according to Pip, cost around \$3300 – \$3500 per child and generate in the order of 1500 kilograms of waste. 'And they'll still be sitting in the tip 500 years from now', she said.

Washing is tackled the same as for other cloth nappies. Pip recommends avoiding chlorine bleaches. 'There are numerous mild options for nappy washing and Napisan is okay. A warm dryer is okay too, but sunshine is always the best way to "sterilise" cloth nappies.'

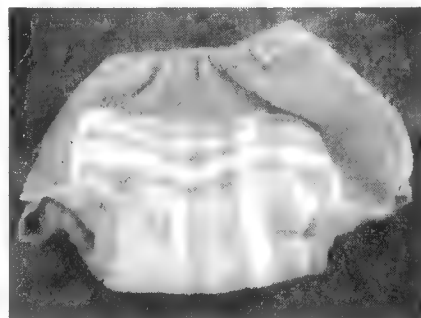
PRETTY BUT PRACTICAL PANTS

Pip makes and sells Woollies, damp-proof pants for covering cloth nappies, made from colourful recycled pure wool blankets. Amanda Steel, a Tassie mother, designed and made woollen pilchers from Dr Flannel and blanket fabric for a number of years, but the cost of using new fabric became prohibitive. Pip uses the same design and has found that all-blanket pants are a better moisture barrier than Dr Flannel. Lots of older mums will remember Dr Flannel pilchers: generations of Aussie bubs were wrapped in them prior to the advent of plastic pilchers. Pip has Woollies in all sorts of colours, varying according to the fabric available.

Woollen products must never be machine dried, Pip says. 'Air the Woollies after each nappy change and wash only when needed. Wash gently in warm water with wool detergent for best results. Hot machine washing will shrink all woollen products.' The Woollies are made in three sizes, but are adjustable with multiple press studs at waist and leg openings.

Pip has found that some families prefer to use the less bulky Zappy pilchers in daytime when putting clothes on and the Woollies at night when the wool insulates and keeps a baby in a damp nappy warmer.

With so much expertise in the field of nappies and protective pants, what tips could Pip offer for keeping babies'



bottoms soft and trouble free? 'Use gentle detergents and give nappies an extra rinse if baby's skin is sensitive. It's also a good idea to sun-dry nappies – it will kill off any bacteria. Allow some nappy-free, bottom-airing playtime each day. It sounds simple but really helps. One point often overlooked is that if babies inadvertently get dehydrated, for example in hot weather or during teething, stronger urine is likely to be produced and can scald sensitive skin!'

When Pip first started at Salamanca Market she could not have envisaged how busy or rewarding life would become. Talking with young parents and helping them care for littlies in an earth-friendly way, with products made from natural materials, beats the nine to five rat race and helps build a better world for future generations.

If you would like further details, including prices, check out Pip's website: www.moonpads.com.au or phone or write (SAE please) to Brinsmead Babies, PO Box 118, Sandy Bay 7006, ph: 03-6223-5151 (Pip is sometimes hard to catch by phone). ☘

Daylilies in Permaculture

by Jane 'Many Leaves' Lawrance, Babinda, Qld.

Who would have thought a plant with such spectacular flowers would be so useful?

A steep slope near the house was covered with tall weedy grasses and I didn't want to mow it. I put my thinking cap on: what could I grow there? The area is in full sun, very well drained and visible from the house. Vegies grow everywhere in my garden, but try to find a spectacular aromatic flower and you'll be hard pressed. My gardening rule of thumb is that everything must be edible, be useful as chop and drop mulch, protect the soil, and create microclimates. With these criteria in mind, the search was on for a suitable flower to grow on the slope.

My permaculture outlook saw this situation as a new opportunity rather than a problem: To begin with, those wild coarse grasses had to come out, roots and all, before the seed heads ripened to drop even more future weeds. Striding out, I made a rough estimate: about 50 metres long by 2 to 4 metres wide – a big project! When you have acreage you soon learn to tackle large projects over several stages, and I knew this would be the case here.

I wanted a bank of flowers I could see from the kitchen window; ideally they would be edible and I also envisaged incorporating some medicinal plants. They'd be close to the house for

a quick pick too. My mind was spinning with ideas.

RESEARCH

In an old seed catalogue I thumbed to the flower section and the word 'daylily' jumped out of the page. That was it! They are edible and withstand drought, heavy rains and even frosts. After writing a letter to the company with all my questions, I set to work with the mattock on the grassy bank. The reply to my letter advised me of another company specialising in daylilies (*Hemerocallis* spp, Liliaceae family). I eventually ordered seven different varieties and they came with a comprehensive fact sheet. Once all potted up, they awaited their final home.

PREPARATION

Over the ensuing weeks, with the help of a hard-working WWOOFer, the first allocated patch (about four metres long) of weedy grasses slowly turned into manageable soil ready for planting. Cut vetiver grass (*Vetiver zizanioides*) provided an excellent mulch, followed up by a generous sprinkling of potassium sulphate (sulphate of potash) to encourage strong stems and roots and disease-resistant plants.

PLANTING

By this time the daylilies were bursting to get out of their pots, so an overcast day seemed ideal to plant them out. Allowing 70 to 80 centimetres between each plant, I formed a mound, spread the long white roots over it, and then gently sprinkled fine soil over them. The crown or base of the plant must be just below the surface. I finished off with mulch and water, but not too much because you can easily rot the roots before they get established, according to the fact sheet.

Maintenance

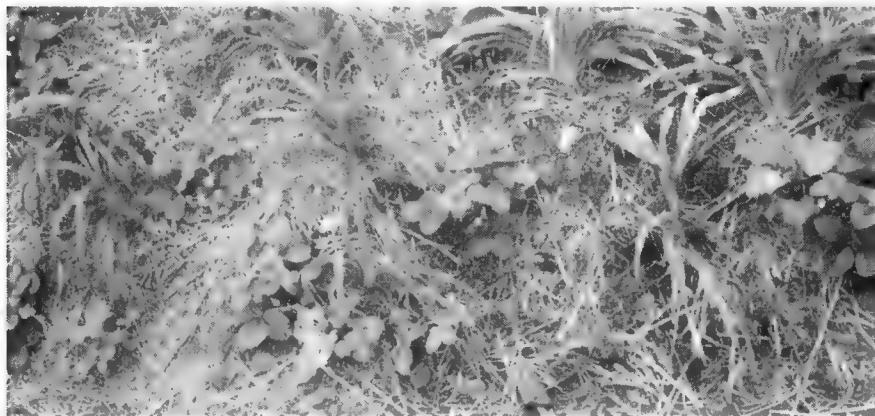
Down the track, once the scape (flower stem) has finished flowering, you trim it off to just below the top of the leaves and prune the old outside leaves, which can be added to the mulch.

ADDING VALUE

On the way home from a Seed Savers' gathering Andrew and I called in to catch up with our friend Jacquie. On our walk around her lush garden Jacquie eagerly started forking up some strawberry runners for me. I realised they would happily grow around the daylilies in the full sun on that sloping bank. We headed home with an array of plants nestled in wet newspaper, all needing urgent attention in the morning. Luckily, showers were forecast, so the strawberry plants and runners were planted out straight away in between the daylilies.

While admiring our work we realised we could grow aloe vera and plantain for their medicinal qualities along the top of the bank to make it an even more useful area. We already had a number of these in pots waiting for inspiration about where to plant them. The whole bank could be filled with useful plants instead of the weedy useless grass. It would take a lot of work.

For better transplanting success, I



Strawberries will spread around the daylilies to make an attractive, edible feature.

always wait for a cloudy day or, even better, a rainy one to ensure less labour in watering from our precious tanks. I had plenty of aloe vera so could plant them about 60 centimetres apart all along the first four metres of the bank. Having only a few pots of plantain, I carefully planted them amongst the strawberries. I know this common weed spreads by seed and can hear some readers laughing, but after reading of their medicinal qualities in Isabell Shipard's book *How Can I Use Herbs In My Daily Life?* I really don't mind! Back in England, where I grew up, I'd had to pull it out of our lush, useless lawn. With all my reading over the years, I've grown to appreciate just how important those so-called weeds are.

The crushed leaves of the broad-leaved plantain (*Plantago major*, from the family Plantaginaceae) applied to a severe cut will stop the bleeding. It's the allantoin in plantain that repairs our body cells. Leaves and seeds are used as a pain-relieving tea, a body detoxifier, a skin ointment and so much more.

DEVELOPMENT

As I slowly weed along the bank to extend the daylily garden, I pull out the large rocks (we are fortunate to have heaps in our soil) and place them along the top and bottom as an edge. With our heavy rainfall, the rocks provide soil stability, maintain moisture, and slowly release valuable nutrients, as well as preventing bandicoots from eating my sweet potatoes!

Propagating Daylilies

As I progress I'm going to need more plants. The strawberries are merrily doing their own thing, sending out long runners to take up residence in newly mulched areas of the bank. However, propagating daylilies needs human intervention. When propagating them from seed, you need to know if they are 'tets' or 'dips'. Tetraploids are shorter, with thick leaves and stems and richly coloured flowers. Diploids have finer foliage and thinner scapes.

Anyone looking for the perfect daylily flower can create their own unique hybrid by cross-pollinating two different flowers. Ensure they are both either tets or dips – you see, tets don't cross with dips. It's best to check with

your supplier. Allow six to eight weeks for the seed to mature. Label the seeds with the pod parent first, and the pollen parent second. Pop the seeds into an airtight, dry glass jar and store in the fridge to improve future germination. I've just planted out some myself that were kindly given to me by a friend who has been busy crossing to get all sorts of exciting colours. Seeds germinate in about 10 days and flower within the year to produce exciting new flower colours.

I'm happy propagating by root division to quickly spread colourful flowers along the bank. To propagate daylilies this way, gently fork up your huge clump, teasing the plants apart. With secateurs, trim and tidy the ends of the long roots and any old outside leaves. Repot, or transplant direct into your daylily bed – so easy!

Proliferation, the final method, is when you get small plants actually growing on the scape. Just remove them by trimming the scape above and below the young plant. Place the stem in a sandy mix so the proliferation is in the soil for root production.

DAYLILY CUISINE

You might be wondering which bits you actually eat. So far, I have nibbled on the delicate flower petals and survived. My research indicates that you can eat small amounts of fresh new stems, new white growth of the tuberous roots, flower petals, closed flower buds and the new young leaves at the centre of the crown – all will liven up a green salad, I'm sure. The old tubers can be dug up and cooked like spuds. I'm still madly propagating mine, so will have to wait for this delicacy!

LANDSCAPING IDEAS

Landscaping with daylilies can create a spectacular feature. Any bare edge in the garden can be transformed. Look around for edges of ponds or lakes, along fencelines and in amongst rockeries. You could grow the miniature varieties as a striking border along a paved garden path. If space is limited and you have a sunny patio, plant some in those smart terracotta pots. If your garden is already brimming with flowers, intersperse daylilies in amongst them. You might like to feature a single

colour or a particular colour scheme, or, like me, just go to town and mix them all up for a wild, colourful tapestry of flowering surprises.

FUTURE PLANS

Enough colourful daydreaming, let's get back to my sloping bank. Andrew intends to construct some sturdy, non-slip steps so we can have quick access to the vegie gardens down through the lush, fruitful bank. With my work and help from visiting WWOOFers, the bank will soon be conquered: weeds all gone, vetiver mulch in place, daylilies moving slowly along the bank, strawberries sprinting ahead with their runners, and aloe vera popping up new pups to plant on. Over time, I'll learn about more sun-loving medicinal plants to add to the border.

I reckon daylilies are the most beautiful creations in the plant kingdom. The magnificent flower buds open in the morning and wither and die by the end of the day, but new buds open up next day for continuous blooms over an extended period from early summer to autumn. As I write, the bank is not finished yet. The wild grasses are still waving at me, but I'll tell you, their days are definitely numbered!

Acknowledgments

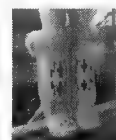
How Can I Use Herbs In My Daily Life?, Isabell Shipard.

Mountain View Daylily Gardens, PO Box 458, Maleny, Qld 4552.

My 'Many Leaves' catalogue of Unusual and Edible Plants is available. (Sorry, no daylilies for sale.) Please send 7 x 50 cent stamps (includes postage) to: Jane 'Many Leaves' Lawrance, PO Box 374, Babinda, Qld 4861. ♡

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WHAT'S ON

SEED SAVERS' CONFERENCE

GR seedy sorts will be interested to know the 17th annual Seed Savers' conference is on 23 – 25 October, at Bowral, south of Sydney. There will be talks, forums, presentations, garden tours, socialising and more. Contact Seed Savers', ph: 02-6685-7560, website: www.seedsavers.net

SUSTAINABLE LIVING OPEN DAY

Reading about alternative building methods and growing food is inspiring, but why not go the next step, see it in action and talk to the people doing it. There will be an open display of homes and gardens, including the tyre house featured in GR 158, on Saturday 20 November. Contact David Alder, 02-6359-3175.

NZ BLACK SHEEP CONGRESS

Bit of a black sheep? The 6th world congress on black sheep is being held in Christchurch, NZ, on November 12 – 17.

It features papers, practicals, farm days and an ag show displaying an astonishing variety of fleece types and colours. Creative types can enter the fibre art competitions even if they are unable to attend the congress. Contact Mary Knox, 900 Ohariu Valley Rd, Johnsonville, Wellington 6004, NZ, or go to www.colouredsheep.org.nz

SAPPHIRE COAST FIELD DAYS

The Sapphire Coast Producer's Association is running a Small Farms Field Day at Bega Showgrounds on 30 – 31 October. The theme is sustainable living, farming and production. Contact Terence Carpenter, 02-6493-2227.

BD FARM WORKSHOP

FarmBi\$ is funding a workshop on using biodynamic farming techniques to improve soil fertility and farm health. Dates for the workshop are 29 – 30 October, and registration in advance is necessary to secure a FarmBi\$

subsidy. Contact Biodynamic Agriculture Australia on 02-6655-0566.

WORK IT BABY

Lots of workshops about at the moment: The Food Forest has Strawbale Building on 6 – 7 November, Fruit and Nut Growing on 10 October, and Organic Vegetables and Free-range Poultry on 28 November. Contact Annemarie Brookman at The Food Forest, SA, ph/fax: 08-8522-6450. Website: www.users.bigpond.com/brookman

Rick and Naomi Coleman are running a 13-day Permaculture Design course from 26 November to 11 December at Leongatha, Victoria. Call 03-5664-3301 for details.

QUILT TO THE HILT

NSW quilters can enjoy either the quilt show at Inverell, 15 – 24 October, ph: 02-6728-8161; or the Moree Creek Quilts Exhibition, 6 November, ph: 02-6760-8315. ☘

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Nursemaid To Josephine

by Sue Turner, Turners Beach, Tas.

Last year I played nursemaid to Josephine not once but twice. I should have known better. You see, Josephine is a large Australorp hen.

It all started when we saw an advertisement for Australorps in the newspaper. I had to go take a look and see what they were like. I couldn't resist them, so we took two home, Josephine and Imogen. They were pretty wild and were covered in mites. They settled in well though, and after about six weeks started laying.

The trouble began when Josephine went broody for the first time. We had just started out with chooks so threw her off the nest with the idea she would soon forget all about it. That worked to an extent, but after laying a short while she went broody again. A very determined young lady this one.

The third time we gave in and rang around to find someone who had fertile eggs. Broody Josephine put on a helpless act. She refused to get off the nest, even for a feed or drink and, as she was the first broody we'd had to deal with, I decided to get her off. Mistake number one. She collapsed to the ground and it took quite a bit to get her to stand; after all, she had been sitting for two days straight at that stage. She had a feed and drink and made her way back to the nest. Josephine being a big

girl, and room in the nest being a little restricted, she stood on the eggs as she settled herself back on the nest. Some of the eggs were weak-shelled. Mistake number two. As she stood on them many gave way. When I checked later, there she was, in the garden having a dust bath. Who wouldn't after sitting on several broken eggs? The nest was a shambles. The eggs that weren't broken were covered in yolk and I worried that they were too cold.

That would have been the end of it for many chooks, but not Josephine. She patiently waited for her nest to be remade and the eggs that hadn't been broken to be cleaned up with a damp cloth. She then resumed her vigil. Some days she refused to eat, so I enticed her with bread. Mistake number three. It gave her the runs, all over her eggs. Once again, she waited patiently for her eggs to be cleaned up and her nest remade.

The rest of the three weeks went fairly smoothly, except for Josephine refusing to leave her nest. So, once a day I lifted her off and she collapsed to the floor then gradually came round to have a feed and drink. She never pecked or got flustered, just calmly accepted her lot.

She hatched five chickens that time and followed with another batch of

Broody Hen Hints

- Expect heavy breeds, Australorp included, to go broody regularly.
- Set only strong-shelled eggs of good size and shape.
- If the hen doesn't voluntarily leave the nest, manually remove her every second to third day, checking no eggs are stuck to her breast.
- Drop the hen smartly and stand back; bowels will work instantly.
- Water should be close by the sitting hen but feed intake is fine every second to third day.

chickens after laying for a further six weeks. That time it went much more smoothly. We have learnt a lot. She proved to be a good and devoted mother and never lost a chicken that she hatched, although there were some frantic squeaks from under her feet.

We thought two batches of chickens must have cured her. She laid for six months and, with spring well advanced, it was looking like she wasn't going to go broody again. Who could blame her? She'd done her share last year. Eventually though, after sitting on the nest all day, she had that familiar faraway look in her eyes.

Josephine was broody again and I couldn't resist getting her eggs to sit on. I put the eggs in front of her one at a time and she just tucked them carefully under her, calm and good-natured as ever. I was playing nursemaid to Josephine once more.

I played it cool this time, with disastrous results. I didn't lift her off the nest daily as previously. The result was that close to hatching time she did a huge mess over them and abandoned the eggs in favour of the cleaner floor. I cleaned up the eggs and replaced them under her, but some had become too cold and died. She squashed most of the rest and only one little cockerel survived. He was gorgeous and she mothered him for a good eight weeks.

I have some bantam Langshans that I am going to use as broodies next time; they are much lighter on their feet. If I let Josephine sit again, she will certainly be lifted off the nest every day for exercise, food and water. ☺



A Hamburgh Tale

by Leone Marten, Wandanian, NSW.

Megg Miller wrote in GR 155 that Silver Spangled Hamburg hens rarely become broody. Well, I must have four very special hens because, although I am new to this game, one of my beautiful purebred hens hatched 10 chicks last season, and another one would probably have hatched 19, only I tried to move her from her perfect nest underneath a piece of corrugated iron in a big pile of cut branches in the yard.

I wanted to move the hen to protect her and the chicks from predators. I had considered removing the hen and eggs at night when she would be calm and catchable, but the thought of reaching into the nest and feeling something nasty dissuaded me. I asked one of my sons to grab the hen and hold her while I carefully placed the eggs in a grass catcher lined with dry sawdust. (I'm told straw is no good because lice hide in the tubes.) We held our breath, he reached in, the hen squawked loudly and off she flew.

I put the eggs in the grass catcher and watched as the hen circled the yard, and then circled the nest, peeking into the grass catcher and circling that. On the third round she decided to climb in and settled on the eggs again. I sighed with relief, then, moving quietly, took hold of the catcher handle and walked slowly over to the pen that I'd earlier cleaned out and lined with sawdust especially for her and her babies. I reached about a metre from the pen door when she suddenly realised something was wrong, squawked, leapt out of the catcher and fled.

I took the catcher back to her nest and hoped she'd return. I kept checking but she went nowhere near the eggs and I didn't blame her.

At dusk, when all the chooks were safely in their pens, I decided to catch the clucky Hamburg. I looked at the four hens all in a row up on the perch. They all looked the same. Which one was the clucky one? I remembered her tail was a bit scraggy. That narrowed it down to two, so I grabbed one and hoped she was the right one, took her down to the house and stuck her into the grass catcher on the bench, hoping the eggs were still warm enough to stay alive. It had been a warm day so it was possible.

She looked at me as if she thought I was mad and moved up to the back of the catcher as far from the eggs as she could squeeze. I turned to get a towel to put over the catcher to keep her in, but she squawked and flew around the kitchen, landing on the stove, in a frying pan. I did what any sensible person would do and grabbed my camera.

After the photographs I caught her, placed her back in the catcher and covered it with chicken wire. My only concern was to save the 19 chickens-to-be and I was getting desperate. She was going to sit on those eggs or else.

Later I peeked into the catcher and there she was, sitting on the eggs! I was overjoyed. It was bed time, so I decided to take the whole show, hen and 19 eggs, to my bedroom for safety, so the dogs would not disturb her.

The phone rang, so I put the catcher on the chair in my bedroom and closed the door. As I prattled away to my sister I heard a sound like someone rifling through a drawer. I ran in; the catcher was on the floor, chicken wire and sawdust everywhere and Angus the Bull

Mastiff was gobbling as many eggs as he could fit into his rather large mouth.

'You mongrel! Get out of here', I yelled, shoving all 62 kilos of him out the door.

I picked up the broken eggs, with membranes and half-baked chicks hanging from them. What a mess. I managed to save nine eggs and I put the eggs under the hen. She sat on them – to my surprise – no doubt waiting for another disaster, a truck to run off the highway and hit the house or a plane to crash on top of her. She had had a tough day, but I thought it showed how determined a broody Hamburg hen could be.

The next morning I took them all up to the pen, but the hen abandoned the eggs again.

A month later, though, I noticed another Hamburg hen sneaking into a rusty old 200-litre drum in the same pile of dead branches where the poor traumatised hen had laid her eggs. Maybe it was the same hen having another go. Nature could take its own course I decided. ☘

Be Aware

- Broodiness is exacerbated by hot weather and a build-up of eggs in the nest.
- Light breeds, which include Hamburgs, are excitable by nature and don't usually make reliable broodies. Heavy breeds are better.
- Only relocate broodies at night; it's less traumatic for them and they're more likely to accept the new nest.
- Lice live on fowls, red mites live in litter and woodwork and come out at night to ingest fowl blood.

Shutting The Gate . . .

by John Mount, Mount Mee, Qld.

Entrance gates and internal access gates are a vital part of the infrastructure on any property; their security and smooth operation can make life on the land just that bit easier.

GATE SECURITY

Leaving an entrance gate open or unlocked is an open invitation to thieves – yes, they are about, even in the country. Even a locked gate will not stop determined persons from entering private property. However, because most thieves are opportunists, they usually are deterred by the prospect of having to labour and spend time to gain entry. These few suggestions will improve the security of entrance gates.

- Chains on gates should be of tempered or high-tensile steel with at least 8 to 10-millimetre-thick welded links.

- It's most important that the chain is positioned around the main post and *below* the supporting or bracing post, otherwise fencing wire can be cut with a pair of pliers and the chain, complete with its lock, can easily be lifted over the main post. Another method is to secure the chain with an eyebolt right through the main post, or insert large coachscrews through the chain links. The edges on screw heads or nuts can be filed back and countersunk for greater peace of mind.

- Naturally, the locks should be robust and a spare key kept. Don't place keys under rocks – constant trips

to the same rock result in a well-worn rock with a well-worn path. Don't bury keys unless you have access to a metal detector (even pirates forget where they buried their treasure).

- If more than one family uses the gate, two locks can be used with two different keys. The two locks can be interlocked together so that either key will open the lock. Alternatively, use a sturdy combination lock.

- To allow access to welcome visitors and tradespeople install a side gateway wide enough for only one person. Ensure this gate always swings shut to prevent loss of pets or stock.

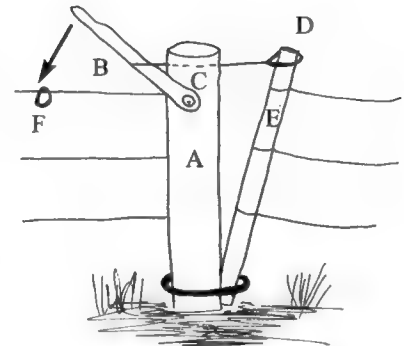
HOMEMADE TENSION GATE

Most properties need a number of internal gates. My first homemade gate was laughable. There was so little tension on the wires animals were able to walk over it as if it wasn't there. Only when the gate itself was able to be pulled taut did it prevent animals straying into the next paddock.

My Solution

- Drill a hole (dotted line) through the main post A, pass a heavy wire through the hole and secure one end around lever B, then make a loop D at the other end.

- Instead of a hole through main post A, a piece of pipe or a few large staples can be nailed to the top or side of the post.



Nifty homemade gate tensioner.

- Screw lever B to the post with a large coachscrew and washer C.

- When loop D is passed over gatepost E and lever B is pulled in the direction of the arrow, the gate is pulled very tight.

- Secure the lever with another metal loop F that has been attached to the top fence wire.

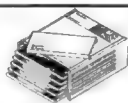
- Remember to secure the base of post E with a large loop of heavy wire around the base of main post A, or by a small length of pipe buried in the ground with an opening large enough to take the bottom of post E. 🍷

PAINTING TIPS

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Frost In The Garden

by Dorothy Creevey, Old Bonalbo, NSW.

Got a problem with frost in your area? Here are some tried and tested tips to help your plants survive the chilly season.

Frost freezes plants and when they are thawed too quickly by the morning sun the cell walls are damaged. If you can slow down the thawing process, perhaps by hosing the frost off the foliage, the plants have a chance, but it would be better to divert or drain the frost away wherever possible.

KEEP FROST FLOWING

To get some idea where frost might flow, close your eyes and picture the

SIMPLE STRATEGIES

Once you know the frosty and frost-free areas of your garden and have done what you can to keep the cold air flowing, use the following hints to help you plan a garden to minimise frost damage and maximise usable planting space.

- If you can't drain areas where frost pools, plant species that don't mind the frost such as pome or stone fruits and berries.

- Many plants are frost-sensitive

- Plant frost-sensitive species in the north-west or south-west and near large buildings.

- If watering is necessary, water mid-morning to allow water to soak in well during the day. If you water late in the day, the water could freeze on the leaves.

- To help protect frost-sensitive seedling trees, grow an arc of hardy plants around them such as lemon grass that could be cut to mulch the



highest point of your garden; imagine a wave of treacle or porridge rolling down through the garden. Does it pile up against an obstacle and take time to roll away? Does it fall into a hollow where it lies?

Get up early enough this winter to take note of where the frost flows and settles and areas of the garden that are frost free. Imagine what you can do to make it keep flowing, perhaps you could:

- Round the corners of square obstacles, allowing the frost to continue flowing.
- Put gaps in the bottom of obstacles to allow it to flow through.
- Install or grow deflectors or open up frost drain areas such as pathways.

when young but hardier later. Use a physical means such as a plastic or hessian plant guard to keep frost off such plants in their first winter.

- Tree canopies trap warm air underneath.
- Dark stone walls and large bodies of water absorb daytime heat and radiate it at night.
- Raised beds may help save plants from ground frosts.
- An automatic watering system set to come on very early in the morning will prevent frost from settling.
- Rocks store heat and keep soil moist.
- Dark mulch attracts and stores the day's heat.
- Light mulch reflects heat away.

tree in spring.

- Start off plants such as tomatoes and capsicums in a hothouse if you can and put them in the garden after the frosty season.

When I started my garden there wasn't a frost-free area anywhere, now about a third of both garden and orchard are only lightly affected. I believe this has come about by plant density and stacking. I can't guarantee that the methods I've used will work in your garden, but I do know I can now grow many subtropical plants I wouldn't have considered a few years ago.

See Neville Jackson's article, 'Design For Frost Protection', in GR 147 for more good advice on frost-free gardening. 🌿

Mead For Me

by Royce Bond, Gracemere, Qld.

What does wine mean to you? A cool glass under the shade of your favourite tree after a hard day at work, or maybe a shared bottle with family and friends at an evening meal?

For me wine is a connection with the things I do in my quest for urban grassroots. It takes me back to the time of my ancestors in Norway, and those of my wife in Ireland. I enjoy a glass of homemade mead, spiced with a glancing touch of cinnamon, cloves and ginger, warmed gently and sipped slowly on a freezing cold night, just after I've brought in the last of the limes from my garden.

I could have a lonely, suicidal Persian courtesan to thank for my enjoyment of wine. Thousands of years ago she decided to end her life by drinking from a jar marked 'poison' by Jamshid, king of the Persians.

A few weeks before she'd come to this decision Jamshid had called for a jar of his favourite grapes, only to find they had turned into a strong-smelling purple liquid. Fearing an assassin's attack he labelled the jar 'poison' and consigned it to one of his darkest cellars, where it quietly fermented into wine.

When the courtesan drank the contents, rather than feeling the stabbing pain of a quick acting poison, she fell into a deep, restful sleep. After awakening from this sleep she excitedly shared her discovery with her king. From then on the king ordered many jars be left to naturally ferment.

The story of Jamshid comes from distant mythology, but we do have records from 2000 BC that show the important part wine played in people's lives. It was used as part of religion and hospitality and for good health. Hammurabi, the ancient king of Babylon, even recognised it as an important source of revenue for his government.

One of the oldest wines drunk was mead, made from fermented honey and water. There are records of it being drunk as long ago as 12,000 BC in the

Norse countries. It could be that in other parts of the world the experience our ancestors gained in preparing mead led to making wine from grapes.

It's quite easy to visit the local hotel or drive-through bottle shop and pick up a bottle of red or white, but I believe drinking processed wine made by multinational companies lacks the feel of enjoying your own homemade wine after a meal from your garden.

Wines can be made from all sorts of ingredients, from leftover pea pods, to tea, flowers, leaves, tree sap and, of course, fruits, vegetables, herbs, spices and cereals. The list of potential ingredients is only restricted by your imagination, and, of course, the safety of the plants you choose.

The subtle variety of flavours available in homemade wines will stagger you. As you develop your skills you will be drawn into the art of blending wines. For example, the sharp, crisp flavour of lime wine is mellowed by the flavour of lemon when blended in a ratio of three parts lime to one part lemon.

Apple wine mixes beautifully with apricot in a blend of one to one, giving the flavour of Christmas cake, as my wife put it. One of the easiest wines to make for the first time, though, is mead.

The origin of mead making has been lost in time, but ancient legends from the Norse and Irish equate it with an arcane form of magic, surrounded by custom, law and superstition. Only selected people in these communities had the power and wisdom to turn honey into mead. This almost magical brew was called upon to add joy and lustre to marriage ceremonies for the Norse, who drank and danced until there was no more mead. It was very unfortunate for the host if the mead ran out before the full cycle of the moon, thus comes the word 'honeymoon'.

The Norse also considered mead to be an important part of fertility, especially in the birth of sons, who were highly prized in these ancient warrior clans. Special cups were handed down



through generations, from which prospective fathers drank, in the thought that these cups filled with mead held some power to deliver male children. Clan members also drank mead from communal cups, called *mazers*. As the cups were passed from hand to hand each person would offer a toast or prayer, before passing on the mazer.

Thankfully, mead is actually one of the easiest wines to make at home; in fact, at first I was so fascinated by the process that as it was fermenting I would just sit there and watch the bubbles rise.

BEFORE YOU START

Equipment

- food-grade bucket
- 2 demijohns (for closed fermenting)
- 1 plastic siphoning hose
- 2 rubber bungs with holes in them
- 2 air locks
- 1 funnel

Hints

- The ingredients and equipment are found in most home brew shops.
- Sugar should only be added as a syrup. To make the syrup add the weight of sugar to the same volume of water and boil (1.5 kilograms is added

to 1.5 litres of water). This syrup is also used to sweeten the bottles. Forty millilitres gives a nice sweet wine.

- Yeast should be fermenting before being added to the must. Boil one cup of orange juice with one tablespoon of sugar. When the temperature is below 30° C add the yeast. Once the juice is frothing this starter mixture may be added to the must.

- Every utensil used in wine making *must* be sterilised or your wine will spoil.

- Glycerine adds smoothness to your wine.

- Put some crushed Campden tablets in the water in your air lock to keep it sterile also.

MEAD

1.75 kg of honey (light honey matures quicker than heavy honey)

water

1 tsp yeast nutrient

juice of 2 lemons, or 2 tsp citric acid

1/4 tsp tannic acid

1 tsp malic acid

1 sachet white wine yeast

glycerine

Campden tablets (crushed)

Boil the honey for half an hour in equal parts of water and spoon off any scum that forms on the surface. Then pour the liquid into a sterilised fermenter (demijohn) and add cold boiled water to 5 litres. When the liquid has cooled to below 30° C, add the other ingredients and seal with an air lock. The yeast must be already fermenting in a starter bottle (see the hints section). As lees (residue) form on the bottom of the fermenter, siphon the clear mead off into a second sterilised

demijohn. Add 1.5 Campden tablets to the demijohn each time you siphon off the wine.

When it has finished fermenting, is eye-bright and has stood for about a month without more lees forming, bottle the mead in sterile bottles.

For a sweet smooth taste add 40 millilitres of sugar syrup to each bottle as well as one teaspoon of glycerine.

Mead is best left for at least three years to mature, but it may be sampled after three months if it is spiced.

LIME WINE

After you have experimented with mead you might like to try your hand at lime wine. When I first made this wine I left it for three months and then tried a sip. It was absolutely foul, so, being the impatient fellow I was, I tipped it out on the ground. I found out there and then that it was a good weed killer. I vowed never to make lime wine again. I decided that I would give away the hundreds of limes that fall from my tree each year instead of making them into wine, but I had forgotten that I had left three bottles under the table.

Eighteen months later I found these bottles and sampled them. Oh boy, they were an incredible, clear, crisp wine that was extremely moreish. Consequently, the next harvest saw 45 bottles of lime wine maturing under the house. Many of my friends and family are thankful that I forgot about those bottles under the table.

1.25 lt lime juice

water

1.5 kg sugar as a syrup

1 tsp pectinase

1 sachet white wine yeast

More Than Meads The Eye

Mead can be flavoured in various ways, with traditional flavourings being given different names.

Melomel: mead that's flavoured with fruit juices, somewhat of an acquired taste.

Cyser: mead flavoured with cider.

Metheglin: mead flavoured with spices and herbs.

Pyment: mead flavoured with grape juice.

Hypocras: pyment flavoured with a subtle touch of spices and herbs.

2 tsp yeast nutrient
glycerine

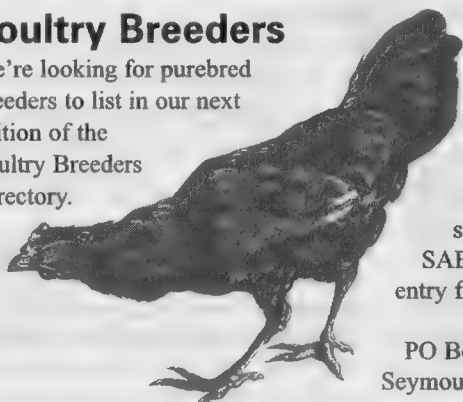
Campden tablets (crushed)

Lightly boil the lime juice with an equal amount of water. When cooled to below 30° C add the pectinase and allow to stand for 24 hours. Next add the other ingredients and pour into a food-grade bucket and allow to ferment for three to four days. Finally, sieve the liquid (must) into a sterilised demijohn, seal with an air lock. Add 1.5 Campden tablets. Siphon the wine into another sterilised demijohn when lees form in the bottom of the fermenter. Add 1.5 Campden tablets each time you siphon the wine.

When it has finished fermenting allow it to stand for about a month in the fermenter and siphon when necessary. For a sweet smooth wine add 40 millilitres of sugar syrup and one teaspoon of glycerine to each bottle. When it's in the bottles allow it to mature for an absolute minimum of 18 months. ☛

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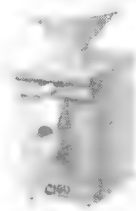


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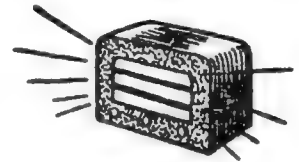
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Radio Reception On A Shoestring

Making The Antenna

by Alex Cranford, Hay, NSW.



In GR 144 there was an article on improving FM radio reception using a car radio. This is ideal for people on a RAPS. There are, however, many Grassrooters who live in country towns and urban areas who might experience marginal reception. Depending on individual circumstances and the choices made, improved FM reception on existing radio sets can be obtained for \$25 or less. You can buy a ready-made FM antenna for about \$50. These would be mounted in much the same way as a normal TV antenna. However, the antenna used in this project is much lighter and therefore much easier to mount.

Some small radios, such as certain clock radios, have very low sensitivity and will not have much of an improved reception, though there will be some. I have a couple in the house that work fine with an external antenna. Furthermore, if you live in an area where radio reception is hopeless, you would not be able to pick up any stations even with the car radio. Such areas are usually in a geographical basin or deep valley. This article might not be much help in that situation. However, if you are receiving shaky reception on a station that you would like to listen to, it is well worth having a go. If you are renting, you will probably need the landlord's permission before installing an antenna. Older music systems with a built-in tuner can have good sensitivity. For the sake of brevity, receiver means hi-fi receiver, music system, or tuner used with an amplifier.

CABLES AND CONNECTIONS

There are two types of antenna cable in use. One is coaxial (coax) that connects to 75 ohm sockets, this is the round type. The plugs and sockets are either male or female. To join two males together, or two females, adapters are required. Then there is the old-fashioned and cheaper ribbon cable that

connects to 300 ohm fittings. This loses less signal than coax. To connect coax to ribbon a balun is required. The signal usually flows in one direction, so make sure you buy the right one.

When it comes to connecting coax, hold against a hard surface, not in the palm of your hand! Use a Stanley knife with a new blade. Remove the last couple of centimetres of the outer insulation, but try not to cut into the outer braided wire. Push the outer braided wire back to form a shoulder. Cut about one centimetre of the inner insulation to expose the inner wire. Sometimes coax is connected to a single screw for the inner wire and the braided wire is held by a small saddle. Make sure none of the braided wire touches the inner wire as distortion of signal will result. All the receivers I have seen have bare wire connections for antenna cables. If, for a coax connection, there is no saddle, twist the braided wire together and connect to GND 300 ohm plugs and sockets – use two pins that are the same. To join two ribbon cables solder the wires and insulate. To join two coax cables only a coax joiner is needed.

In the first place you might be able to get improved reception by using your TV antenna for your receiver. To make a test, remove the input antenna cable that goes into the back of the VCR or TV. Use an appropriate cable to connect to the receiver. See above paragraph. Given that the TV antenna has improved and satisfactory reception and all the desired stations can be picked up, proceed to 'wiring in' section (next issue). If the receiver is switched on to mono, at night you could try picking up other stations. If any other stations can be picked up, but not all that clearly and are considered desirable, you might want to make an FM antenna.

EQUIPMENT

You need an old TV antenna with prongs

that are exactly 760 millimetres long. You only need two prongs and the plastic bracket to make one FM antenna. Also required is some ribbon TV cable. You might not even have to buy any at all, or maybe not the complete length. Apart from being found at tips, there could be some ribbon cable in the vicinity of the antenna. Many older houses have had an antenna replacement with the new one using coaxial cable and with the old ribbon cable left discarded in the attic or dangling down the side of the house. I have a clock radio working successfully where the antenna wire is an old vacuum cleaner electrical cord. This antenna cost me next to nothing to make. In any case, ribbon cable is not that expensive. You can also use electrical cords from dead electrical appliances by soldering the wires together and insulating with heat shrink tubing (available from electrical wholesalers).

Alternatively, try a splitter that can be used as a coupler. This is used to join the two cables from the two antennas. Also, a TV/FM splitter wall plug, although a more expensive option, might prove to be more practical than the above option for framed houses that have noggings in them. The only downside of this option I found was that reduced FM reception was experienced with the TV cable plugged in at the same time. Also needed is a length of coax cable.

Other requirements are a couple of 45-millimetre plasterboard screws, a small U-shaped bolt with clamp if using the TV mast, a $\frac{3}{16}$ " nut and bolt with spring washer or threaded bar of the same with two spring washers.

METHOD

If fitted, first cut and discard the thick aluminium wire that is used to collect the signal from the prongs. It could already be broken. Remove a pair of prongs and the plastic bracket that holds them. Do not discard the rest of

the frame as yet. Place the plastic bracket in the vice firmly, but not too tightly. Remove the nuts and bolts securing the prongs to the bracket and remove the prongs. These nuts and bolts are not reused for this project. The prongs on these old TV antennas were further apart than the required 25 millimetres. However, the prongs must not touch each other. It is therefore necessary to drill out the bracket using a 1/2" drill bit with an electric drill to bring the prongs closer. Drilling the plastic does smell a bit, so have good ventilation. Now secure the prongs back in with the two plasterboard screws. Although plasterboard screws are 'self-drilling', I find it easier to pilot out with a 7/64" drill bit first. The FM antenna is now ready for testing.

Options For Mounting

Note that the higher up the antenna is the better. If you are like me and like to have radios all over the house, you might want to have more than one FM antenna.

Use the TV antenna mast. Cut the section of gal RHS off the old TV antenna that had the bracket attached to

it. Take it up to the TV antenna with the U-bolt. Make sure it is big enough to accommodate the clamp, RHS and nuts. If not, take it back to the shop for a bigger one. Now drill out the holes for the U-bolt. Although the holes should not be excessively big, they should be a sliding fit, no excessive force should be required to fit. Disconnect the cable from the TV antenna and connect to the FM antenna and fit. Ideally, the antenna should be perpendicular to the direction of the transmitter. If you are trying to pick up a station from a transmitter that comes from another town and the local transmitters are in a different direction, you might still be able to pick up the signal from the local transmitters (if any) even if the antenna is not perpendicular to the local transmitters. If there is improved reception just using the TV antenna, reconnect the cable back on to the TV antenna and proceed to 'wiring in' section (next issue).

Alternatively, if there is a brick chimney and a metal roof, a frame can be cut from the old TV antenna frame into a capital-L shape. It would have had four brackets holding eight prongs. Short tek

screws for metal are used to hold the top of the ridge capping and made stable with fencing wire. On one of these I tied the fencing wire to the guy wire that is used to secure the TV antenna mast. On the other chimney a piece of fencing wire with loops on the end was installed covering three sides of the chimney. A separate wire was used to tie the two loops together. To prevent chaffing, small pieces of gal sheet were inserted at the corners. Another piece of wire was tied from the frame to the two loops.

Or, a long section of pipe can be inserted through a hole at the top of the roof and secured at the base and at the top of a roof truss. Some silicone or flashing should be applied at the join of the pipe and roof. I have yet to do this, but this is what a builder did who has a tiled roof on his house. It is probably better to locate the hole above a wall rather than a ceiling joist. Small holes are drilled out of a tile, the hole tapped out. If it smashes, a piece of flashing is used. I have a long piece of gal pipe that I always knew would come in handy.

Next time I'll describe how to wire in your antenna. ☛



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Xfacta™ is a new biofertiliser said to significantly increase the health and vigour of plants' roots systems. The result is healthier plants and enhanced flower and fruit quality with longer life. Xfacta™ is wholly natural, beneficial to the environment, safe to handle and includes soil microorganisms that unlock nutrients in the soil and make them available to plants. Use of Xfacta™ makes plants more resistant to fungal and insect attack. It is not a conventional fertiliser, but reduces the amount of fertiliser plants need by up to 30 percent as well as assisting plants to be more tolerant of saline conditions; it may also help adjust soil pH towards neutral in both acid and alkaline soils. Xfacta™ is available at garden centres Australia-wide in a 500-millilitre bottle or a two-litre hose spray-on.



To find a supplier near you or for more details contact the Grow Better hotline: 03-9720-7474 or 1800-777-475. Visit the website at: www.growbetter.com.au or email: info@growbetter.com.au

RECENT RELEASES

Titles described can be ordered through your nearest bookstore.

KIDS' QUILTS IN A WEEKEND

Elizabeth Keevill

This book will get your fingers itching to go, with 20 colourful projects adults can make for babies to 10-year-olds. As well as actual quilts, projects include laundry bags, baby bags, safari wall pockets and a very cute stuffed cat using the quilting method. There's even a checkers quilt with moveable pieces. Easy instructions, plenty of photos and some really beautiful designs make this a very appealing book. Quilts are divided into lazy, lively or busy weekend projects, depending on how complex they are. There's a handy summary of techniques and skills at the back, and the book is beginner friendly.

H/b, 360pp, Hamlyn, distributed by Bookwise International, 174 Cormack Rd, Wingfield 5013. Ph: 08-8268-8222. RRP: \$39.95.

HEALING HERBS OF HOME AND HEARTH

Ann Marie Wishard

This 'pocket' book is small enough to fit in your hand, but contains profiles of over 100 herbs, complete with historical tidbits and a drawing of each. There are notes on collecting, growing and understanding herbs, and recipes for using them. The tone is conversational, the look old-fashioned, homy and nostalgic. A delightful little guide.

P/b, 304pp, Running Press, distributed by Bookwise International, 174 Cormack Rd, Wingfield 5013. Ph: 08-8268-8222. RRP: \$12.95

THE GATE VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK

Adrian and Michael Daniel

Hungry? Why not try some wild mushroom fricassee, beetroot and goats' cheese ravioli, aubergine charlotte or a roast vegetable tangine. This is vegetarian food suitable for serving to your mother-in-law or boss: stylish, modern and delicious. From the kitchen of UK's award-winning Gate Restaurant, it's 'Asia meets the Mediterranean'. Recipes are sometimes complex, but never fussy, and the result makes it worthwhile. Also contains great sauce, salsa and bread recipes.

H/b, 300pp, Mitchell Beazley distributed by Bookwise, 174 Cormack Rd, Wingfield 5013. Ph: 08-8268-8222. RRP: \$59.95.

DESIGN YOUR GARDEN WITH LINDA ROSS

Linda Ross

Linda Ross reckons there are no hard and fast rules when it comes to designing your garden, just plenty of practical facts you might like to know. She takes the reader through a step-by-step garden design process and provides help, hints and ideas along the way. The book covers how to assess your land, start your own garden design book (I know, sounds suss, but is actually not a bad idea), understand the design elements for gardens and translate ideas into reality. Along the way, there's how to mulch, pot, prune, water, fertilise and more. Five types of gardens are discussed in detail: tropical, Mediterranean, Mexican, bush, and cottage, each with its own plan. Linda Ross is pro chooks, low-water gardens, mulch and organics, and uses no chemicals at all on her own two gardens. The book would be most useful for those contemplating starting a new garden or doing a makeover.

P/b, 160pp, Simon & Schuster, PO Box 33, Pymble 2073. Ph: 02 9983 6624. RRP: \$29.95.



HOME WORK: HANDBUILT SHELTER

Lloyd Kahn

This reviewer might as well come clean and admit to loving *Home Work*. Looking straight from the seventies with fabulous old and new photos and drawings, it's actually a new release, and it is gold. Every sort of building is in here, except, perhaps, the brick veneer. But who needs the conventional when you can peruse handmade yurts, tree-houses, barns, teepees, gypsy wagons, log cabins, rock walls, temples, you name it, many with building plans and commentary? There's inspiration in abundance. The builders featured are great fun; one approaches his house via a flying fox over a river, another is pictured building his house entirely in the nude (with many a strategic rock). Full of quirks, both this and the author's earlier work, USA hippie bible *Shelter*, now reissued, are well worth the look for any GR builder or dreamer.

P/b, 244pp, Shelter Publications, distributed by Bookwise, 174 Cormack Rd, Wingfield 5013. Ph: 08-8268-8222. Both RRP: \$55

MACMILLAN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FLOWERS

Mary Moody, Geoffrey Burnie, Jennifer Stackhouse et al

This satisfyingly thick, hardcover encyclopedia of flowers is arranged by colour, which proves to be a surprisingly handy and useful method. Not only does this arrangement mean less time searching for a plant you may have seen in someone's garden, but you can be agreeably distracted by all the other plants in the same colour palette. Every entry in the encyclopedia includes a colour photo of the flower. Before the separate colour sections, there are a range of preliminary chapters detailing aspects of gardening such as design, maintenance and troubleshooting, as well as sections on container gardens and house plants. The book shows a strong awareness of waterwise gardening and organic methods. This is an international book, but the presence of the above authors has meant that Australian plants are well represented and Australian conditions dealt with throughout.

H/b, 608pp, Pan Macmillan Australia, Level 18, St Martins Tower, 31 Market St, Sydney 2000. Ph: 02-9285-9100. RRP: \$59.95.

Also, look out for the *Open Garden Scheme Guide 2004-05*, full of lovely gardens to visit, out now from ABC books. Available at ABC bookshops and centres or ph: 03-5428-4557. RRP: \$16.95.



DOWN HOME ON THE FARM

by Megg Miller.

'That's an ugly looking sheep, what are the lumpy things under its neck?', asked an unimpressed Suni as we stood looking at my sheep. Clearly, she wasn't enamoured with Mora the Merino. I'm not all that keen either; Mora is wild-eyed and flighty. Any unexpected movement sends her fleeing, and what's really bad is that she is a natural born steeplechaser. Fine if you're a light-framed Merino, but a worry when obese English Leicesters think they can also hurdle. 'What's the bit underneath?' Suni asked. Hmm. I'd noticed the wool was bunching up suspiciously around the belly button too. Maybe Mora was a Maurice, the conniving creature. I swear this sheep has never urinated in front of me, thereby giving its gender away. It's an escapee from one of the neighbours' flocks, loves the easy life Dora and Flora enjoy, and will be a terror to catch come shearing time.

I trapped my two recently for hoof trimming. Luring them into a shed

ended up being the easiest part. Knowing their inclination to push into the turkey sheds, I left some lucerne straw in an empty one with the door ajar. The result? Two trapped sheep with the eagle-eyed Merino anxiously waiting outside. I trimmed the hooves at night because I figured the sheep would be easier to manage. Both were shockers. They fought, kicked, lunged, but I stuck with the job. Rose-coloured memories of old Merle, the first cross pet sheep, returned. All that was necessary with her was to grab a front leg and lean; down she would go. I seriously think I will have to alter my comments on the English Leicester breed to something along the lines of 'remarkably strong and uncooperative'. Meanwhile, I'm settling on Maurice as a name instead of Mora. How could I have missed noticing he was male?

This spring the poultry are being downsized, not only because I want to

pack up and move sometime in the future, but the kitchen is being taken over by eggs. Ask me for a chook and I'll be happy to give you a couple. When a friend lost her chooks to a neighbour's dog I offered some replacements, Dolly and Francine. 'You'll love Dolly, she waits for me in the rafters and then flies down for a treat of wheat each morning', I promised. The hens packed their bags and relocated. I took along a pair of young pullets too, but once I saw the low fencing in their yard I changed my mind. They'd need some suburban schooling before adjusting to the confines of a small yard.

Dropping a feeder off for Dolly and Francine next morning, I was greeted by an exhausted friend. 'You've just missed the great escape. Dolly slipped out, ran over the road and has been through every neighbour's garden!' The devious Dolly was finally caught and returned. She slipped out again a



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few days later and after a week's freedom and some life-threatening experiences has been returned to the quiet life with Francine. Maybe she was looking for her old home and the rafter ritual. Thank goodness I took the pullets home, they're really flighty and wild. Bet no one will want chooks now they've heard about their lively disposition.

Regardless of whether chooks are cunning or controllable, they produce great organic matter. In recognition of this I've had a couple of state-of-the-art compost bays built at my town block. As the chook sheds get cleaned out I bag the stuff up and take it over. The muck and litter can sit there until it's needed. All the vegie garden soil has been carted over, a combination of yard rakings and shed organic mix. It takes time to break down, but is an improvement on the loveless sandy soil the garden was built on. The compost bays are for holding the heaps of leaves that fall in autumn and smother what's underneath and, of course, prunings. Friends have suggested covering the compost bays with netting and installing gates. 'Megg these look perfect for chook runs, they're too good for compost.' Naughty thoughts, but I am wondering – maybe quail or something similar?

Sticking with the naughty, I've just purchased a flame gun. I'm sure we'll be able to do great things together, but there has been a marked lack of enthusiasm from friends and family. Only Suni has embraced the idea and is keen to incinerate the weeds in her garden beds. We bought it along to Fathers' Day lunch and got it going, but still, dire prophecies abound. Yes, it will melt the weed mat and polypipe and everything else and set the mulch alight. Frankly, there is more chance I'll burn my hand or foot than set Victoria alight. An in situ report next issue.

Around the time the flame gun arrived our mushroom farms were ready to pick up from the local nursery. With retail prices as high as \$9.95 a kilo on occasions I decided that growing your own had to be cheaper. Sue, our office receptionist, and I read up on cultivation and decided we were knowledgeable enough to start. I went

all around our closest provincial city and couldn't track mushroom farms anywhere. Just by chance I mentioned it to our local nursery. 'No trouble, we'll make a phone call.' The farms duly arrived, but haven't been as easy as we thought. The instructions are on the side, which means reading by torchlight on your knees. Finding a dark cool spot hasn't been difficult, but ascertaining the moisture level has been really tricky. My compost is rather on the dry side and Sue says hers has been too wet. There is lots of white mouldy looking stuff in there with the compost straw, but no mushrooms yet. We're hoping for weeks of good results, but as the ambient temperature starts to rise at the end of the month our window of opportunity as mushroom magnates diminishes. Any advice from experienced backroom growers would be appreciated for our next try.

I've been in cleaning-up mode, though haven't quite got the killer instinct yet. You know, out with this and this and everything in the box and no regrets. Maybe the flame gun will fire up my enthusiasm. The trouble with sorting out old junk is that long-forgotten treasures reappear. At the end of the session the must-keep pile is always higher than the throw-outs. For instance, I found two working egg caddlers, a backpack spray outfit, several empty bee boxes, a honey extractor, chook feeders – you know, good stuff. And that was in one corner of the shed. It's clear I need another shed to move all this over to. There are piles everywhere: burning wood, good wood, handy flower stakes, netting for fencing, netting for protecting plants, and netting I can't bear to throw out. I already have storage spots on the town block for corrugated iron, useful building wood and tomato and plant stakes. Now I'll have to set one up for rolls of netting.

A tradesman working there recently said the place was perfect for someone who liked tinkering. What a generous compliment. It may have arisen from the fact that there are a number of buildings on site so a workshop wouldn't be difficult to organise. On the other hand, it might have been due to the half-finished state of things. It takes time and money to renovate, rebuild

and re-establish. It's also taxing running two places and a couple of magazines. 'Have you moved yet?' people still ask. 'Not quite', I respond. All in good time is a useful philosophy. ☘

MILK THE CLASSICS

Dairy cows produce more milk when listening to relaxing music, researchers have found. In one study, milk yield rose by three percent (0.7 litres) per cow. Cows prefer classics or romantic tunes; favourites included Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony and Simon & Garfunkle numbers. Cows did not react similarly to rowdy songs. The calming music is presumed to increase milk yield by reducing stress, and is also used by chicken farmers. Try it and tell us your cows' favourites. ☘

PENPALS

Hi, my name is Justin, I am 12 and seeking a male penpal of the same (or similar) age. My interests include home schooling, Gameboy and reading. I will reply to any letters and would love to have a penpal with similar interests.

Justin Proeve,

C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661

I am an English lady (60) living in New Zealand and would like to correspond with penpals in Australia or NZ. I am a vegan organic grower, interested in sustainable living, the environment and natural history, also music and the arts.

Lydia,

Email: theoldfarmstead@clear.net.nz

My name is Suzanne Thomas, I am 38 years old, married and have a 13-year-old daughter. My hobbies include scrap-booking, decoupage and vegetable gardening. I am a stay-at-home mum and I like communicating with people. If you like long chatty letters, please put pen to paper.

Suzanne Thomas,

69 Whiting Rd, ST AGNES 5097.

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HOW TO ADVERTISE

Use the form provided below, or a separate sheet of paper, to print your advertisement clearly, **not in block capitals**, including correct punctuation. If you have more than one ad please print each one on a separate page. Remember to include an address or phone number in your advertisement. Count the number of words and multiply by 85 cents per word (phone number counted as one word) to work out the total cost of your advertisement. Send **with payment** to Grass Roots, PO Box 117, Seymour 3661, before the deadline and we'll include your advertisement in the next issue of Grass Roots. **Deadline for GR 166 is 29 October, 2004.** Please do not fax ads.

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PROPERTY FOR SALE

NEW SOUTH WALES

NORTHERN NSW BETWEEN LISMORE AND MURWILLUMBAH, 2 ac & shed & crk, 3 ac & lge house, 5 ac & house & shed & crk, 5 ac, 10 ac, 20 ac & crk. From \$180,000. Ph: 02-6689-7041, 0425-344-729.

SECLUSION WITH NATURE: Private 2 ha north-facing house site with $\frac{1}{12}$ share of estab 420 ha certified organic MO at Darkwood on mid north coast. Surrounded by rugged nat pks, Bishops Creek MO is nestled along a major tributary of beautiful Bellinger River – perm wilderness-fed crk, swimming holes, cleared crk flats, r/forest gullies, forested slopes. Diverse native wildlife incl koalas & over 140 bird species – many spectacular or uncommon. Cosy timber 2-room cabin at this tranquil house site adj to forest in a hidden valley. Fuel stove for HW/cooking/heating, solar HW, 12V solar power, composting toilet, outside shower, ph line, f/trees. Not far to main valley & community assets, incl meeting house, pump & tank, tractor, trailer, f/trees. Bellinger a bit over 30 mins. \$160,000. Ph: Carole, 02-6655-1225.

OWN YOUR OWN NATIONAL PARK between Eden & Bombala near the Vic border, 48 ha (120 ac), all bush, good soil, ample water, wildlife, crks, seclusion. Do your own thing in peace. Reduced to \$84,000. Details: 02-4784-1020.

PERMACULTURE PARADISE NEAR TAREE:

Five picturesque & private ac, with 2 ac of estab subtropical & warm temperate fruit & nut trees, vegetable gardens & poultry pens. Permanent crk lined with r/forest vegetation, an elevated north-facing building site & 2.5 ac of good grazing land over the crk. An edible plant nursery with the potential to continue supplying seeds & propagation stock from the garden to local organic & permaculture enterprises. A back access way leading to the state forest just 600 m from the boundary. Undeveloped 20 m wide rd along the back of the property, power pole in the back paddock & future potential to subdivide. Two lge c/vans joined with an annexe & solar hot water system. Two storage sheds. Situated just 8 mins from Taree & 15 mins to beaches. \$315,000. Ph: 0415-443-904.

MURWILLUMBAH REAL ESTATE has a range of multiple occupancy properties from \$65,000. Contact Christian or Gary on: 02-6672-7267. www.murwillumbahrealestate.com

ENJOY AUSTRALIA'S BEST CLIMATE in beautiful Port Macquarie. New fully furnished 2 b/r relocatable home in top tourist park 3 mins walk to hospital, handy racecourse, 10 mins bus to town. Garden shed tub & washing machine, front verandah, c/port, garden space, this roomy gem sleeps 7 yet suits 1 or 2. Site rent \$75 pw covers rates, water, sewerage, security. Valued \$80,000. Owner overseas, must sell. Offers. Ph: Peter Reynolds, 02-6581-0176 or 0412-654-521.

WYONG 1½ hrs nth Sydney, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ ac (2888 m²). Renovated cottage, 3 b/r, study, 2 bathrooms, stable, paddock, chook shed, vegie garden. Close to rail, shops, freeway, 20 mins beach. \$495,000. Ph: 02-4351-2502.

CLARENCE VALLEY, SMALL FARM: 106 ac, 40 mins from Grafton, 2 houses, full solar power, 3 dams, windmill on spring-fed bore & much more. \$280,000 private sale. Ph: 02-6647-3173.

MID NORTH COAST, ORARA VALLEY, between Grafton & Coffs Harbour, $\frac{1}{6}$ share in 'Morningstar Community', 422 ac comprising native bush & r/forest, surrounded by state forest, situated in a beautiful valley. Five-ac house site, north facing, with crk frontage incl: bush-pole construction dwelling (1st stage of building completed), concrete blocks laid up to floor level, roof completed, power connected, tank water on site, ph avail, Colorbond shed 6 x 9 m, estab f/trees. Community assets incl: fully contained mudbrick dwelling, organic vegie garden, tractor + much more. School bus. \$88,000. Ph: 02-6652-3928.

PARADISE ON THE SOUTH COAST: lge block with 2 b/r, well-maintained Hardiplank home. Double garage, 2 water tanks, outdoor BBQ area, peaceful surroundings. Beautiful garden with fish & frog ponds, orchard & vegie patch will keep you & your family fed all year round. Ten mins to Narooma, 5 mins to river or beach. Walk to shops, club & school. \$250,000 ONO. Ph: 02-4473-5183.

GRASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR SALE

NEW SOUTH WALES

JACKADGERY, NORTHERN NSW: 485 ac of beautiful natural forest land, hills & valleys with 2 clear crks. Top 50 ac of flat land backs onto state forest. Glorious views, 5 mins drive to village & beautiful Mann River, 20 mins drive to city of Grafton. \$220,000. Ph: 08-8987-3440.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE, SOUTHERN SUBURBS: 3 mins from historic Pt Willunga beach; solid house on 1/4 ac. Organic veggie garden, f/trees, chooks, r/water tanks. Comfy house, 2 - 3 b/bs + study, open area kitchen/lounge/dining, wood heater, solar hot water. Roomy shed. Adelaide 45 mins. Close to shops, school, buses. \$285,000. Ph: 08-8557-8456.

QUEENSLAND

SUNSHINE COAST HINTERLAND, Qld, Crystal Waters Ecovillage, 3 separate dwellings on 1 ac, 5 b/bs, handcrafted features, 4 bathrooms, heated pool & spa. Native gardens, dam, overlooking river. \$395,000. Why not live in 1 of the buildings & derive a rental income from the 2 others? Enquiry: Margaret, 07-5435-8149, Gaby, 07-3852-1586.

ACREAGE LIFESTYLE BLOCK, views of Lockyer Valley, high position, suit pole home, 4 ac, 25 mins to Ipswich, Hattonvale, Qld, \$87,500. Ph: 0418-887-915.

Email: nggibson@skynetglobal.com.au

CONONDALE, SOUTH-EAST QLD, 20 mins Maleny, 3 ac with home on Mary River. \$350,000. Ph: 07-5494-4836.

View: www.possumcreekorganicfarm.com

THE LEAP (14 mins nth of Mackay) 2.5 ac very undulating. Town, bore & tank water, septic, high-set house, 3 b/r (all with built-in wardrobes & ceiling fan), 4th b/r/study, new bathroom, new kitchen. New 20 x 11 m shed. Mail & waste removal. School bus nearby. Beautiful views of The Leap. \$275,000. Ph: 07-4954-0026.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY BUSH PARADISE, 623 ac near Childers, Qld, 3 b/r steel-frame Hardiplank house, solar power, ph. Part fenced for goats, 3 sheds, water, wood stove with HW. Low cost self-suff living. \$263,000. Ph: 0417-001-517. More info:

www.users.bigpond.com/kev.kdp/farm.html

BOWERLAND HOUSE, LAMINGTON PLATEAU, closest accom to O'Reilly's Resort. Three double b/bs, fully self-cont + granny flat. Views from O'Reilly's to Binna Burra Lodge & Mt Springbrook. Ph: 07-5544-0650.

MOOLBOOLAMAN/GIN GIN: 25 ac, fully treed, unimproved, elec avail, 10 mins to town, 1 hr to coast. \$30,000. Ph: Greg or Jackie, 02-4953-1002, email: gregnjackie@ozemail.com.au

DEADLINES: GR 166 - 29 OCTOBER
GR 167 - 23 DECEMBER

WANTED TO BUY: LOWOOD, ESK SHIRE, close to Lowood, but classed 'rural' with council. Tank water only. Home needing TLC, but not major structural work, 2 1/2 ac+. Genuine responses please up to \$165,000. Ph: Mel, 07-5426-1792.

MOUNT MORGAN: Miner's cottage, lge shed, 1000+ m block, 5 mins shopping centre, post office. Overgrown section, reasonable offer accepted. Ph: 07-4938-1737.

VICTORIA

AVOCA, PYRENEES: Solar alternative lifestyle, western red cedar home on scenically located 100+ acres, gum tree plantation, relaxed environment, many features. \$275,000. Ring for details: 03-5466-2209.

STRATHBOGIE RANGES: Geodesic dome house & bungalow on 40 ac. Gas & solar power, septic, spring-fed dam & tanks. Comfortable homes in a beautiful & peaceful bush setting. \$245,000. Contact: 0401-091-115.

www.elpablito1111@yahoo.com.au

MARYBOROUGH AREA, 2 b/r w/b house on 44 ac, pine-lined kitchen, 2 air cons, 3 ceiling fans, Coonara wood heater, new roof, concrete verandah all round, c/port adjoins lock-up shed. Top pressure town water supply, 2 dams, 1 water tank, 30 x 40 concreted shed, power & ph connected, incl 10 ft lock-up tool shed, one 30 x 40 shed with lots of good old stuff, 2 lock-up dog yards, sheep yards - currently running 60 sheep - portable saw bench, Fergie tractor with lots of farm implements, ride-on mower, meat saw, fire-fighting pump, 2 horse-drawn carts, harness. Two hrs Melbourne, tranquil setting. \$255,000. Ph: 03-5464-7235.

RURAL PROPERTY: CANN RIVER, East Gippsland, 3 hrs from Canberra. Beautiful property with lge river frontage, 180 ac, 25 ac river flat. Ranch style 3 b/r home, plenty of shedding, irrigation licence, high rainfall area. \$290,000. Ph: 0427-053-857.

PROPERTIES WANTED

BEGA TO BAIRNSDALE. Small ac with house site, power & rd access, preferably with sml dam, tanks or crk. Or, weekender/cottage on sml acreage or lge block with power (builder's pole will do), town or tank water, dam or crk. Contact Mick or Carmel, 02-6248-5763 BH, or mobile 0439-458-430 between 1 & 15 Oct.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify us of any change of contact details so we can redirect enquiries.
Call us on 03-5792-4000.

TO RENT OR PURCHASE in Queensland, acres with more than one dwelling, 3 or 4 would be great. Secluded position but not too far from facilities. Ph: Gail, 07-4941-8007, 0417-744-845. Email: elaminc@bigpond.com

SHACK OR COTTAGE in SE Tasmania, on owner finance, 5 - 10% deposit & minimum \$100 pw payments. Please ph: 03-6224-0901 (Jade).

FOR RENT/CARETAKER WANTED

MID NORTH COAST NSW, 60 km west of Macksville, nearest village Taylors Arm - 35 km. Responsible individual or couple wanted to rent stone & timber cottage with o/fire, wood stove water heating, gas fridge, pit toilet, no power, ph connected. Situated on 24 ac bush & r/forest, pure perm water, some fruit & nut trees. Rent & terms neg. Ph: 02-4998-3397, or 0412-416-034.

BUDGET ACCOMMODATION (pets allowed), \$200 a fortnight. Beautiful Cape York remote bush retreat. Fully self-contained, clean, on-site c/vans. Two only avail. Long-term tenants only. Minimum 3 months, 4 weeks rent in advance then pay fortnightly. Suit artists, authors, hippies or has-beens, seeking solitude & serenity away from the rat race. River, lake, good fishing, tropical f/trees, bush passionfruit, wildlife abounds. The Old Regent Gold Mine Accommodation. For map & info-pack ph: 07-4041-5422 (any-time). Write: The Caretaker, PO Box 1030, COOKTOWN 4871.

COTTAGE FOR RENT: south coast of WA, cottage located in sml coastal town of Bremer Bay, 120 km NE of Albany, 1 - 2 b/bs, elec HW & stove. Suit single or couple. \$100 per week. Ph: 08-9772-3555.

Email: eshorto@westnet.com.au

WANTED TO RENT/ CARETAKE

A SMALL HOUSE AND LARGE LOCK-UP SHED, anywhere from Violet Town, Victoria, northwards along the divide, warm but not tick country. \$140 per week maximum. If run down I can fix. Hans Van Vlodrop, 2135 McEwan Rd, KYABRAM 3620.

CHEERFUL HEALTHY WOMAN in mid 50s looking to caretake cottage in country area. Have excel house-sitting references. Ph: M, 0408-893-714.

FOR SALE

WIND TURBINE BLADES, set of 3 fibreglass moulded, suit Fisher & Pykel alternator or geared alternator, blade speed 150 - 350 RPM. \$385 incl p&h. Can email photo. PO Box 39, TWO ROCKS 6037.

Email: minshull@openaccess.com.au

GRASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE

BUFFALO GRASS SEEDS: drought & shade resistant, some plants. Our pony poo for garden. I grow stinging nettles. Ph: 03-9399-9800, Melb.

BUSINESS FOR SALE

HERVEY BAY, busy Bowen Therapy Centre, located in a beautiful location near the sea. Ph: Pat, 07-4125-5122.

OPPORTUNITIES

WANTED – couple, n/s, n/d, as working partners in new house & garden maintenance business. No money required, c/van & car supplied. Ph: 07-4945-2409. See website: www.mikestonesplace.com

TRAVEL COMPANION WANTED for down-to-earth, adventurous, 55-yr-old lady GR reader. I enjoy art, music & travel. Would suit Christian person. Ph: Jan, 07-4126-8209.

Email: jancam53@hotmail.com

WANTED HORSE/DOG LOVER/GARDENER with c/van. Free quiet site in return for farm sitting, Yarck, Victoria. Ph: 03-5773-4215.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

WORK FROM HOME: Risk-free Mail Order, part or full time, low set-up cost, free info. Ph: 08-9537-7271.

COMMUNITIES/SHARES

ANAHATA COMMUNITY, OUTSKIRTS OF AUCKLAND, New Zealand. Rural type environment near city amenities. New residents welcome. See: www.anahata.co.nz for details. Contact by email: inquiries@anahata.co.nz

WANTED: ARTIST/TEACHER looking to buy share in MO (prefer near water) or a separate property, or to link up with other creative people with view to forming MO. Flexible, creative, positive people who are dog friendly. Ph: 02-4782-1109. Email: clarelhdm@yahoo.com

PUBLICATIONS

HOME EDUCATION, for info send SAE to: Home Education Network, PO Box 461, DAYLESFORD 3460.

STEINER EDUCATION & HOMESCHOOLING BOOKS. Alan Whitehead, PO Box 329, BLACK-HEATH 2785. Ph: 02-4787-5335. Website: www.users.bigpond.com/goldenbeetlebooks/

'NATIVE STINGLESS BEES' for profit or pleasure – how to get started, pollination/honey potential in Qld. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 50 c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74-G4, NORTH RICHMOND, NSW 2754.

PLACING AN AD?

See page 75 for details

'THE MIRACLE OF MULCH' by Mary Horsfall: Mulch builds up organic matter, fertility and biodiversity in your soil for long-term garden health. *The Miracle Of Mulch* describes the vital mulching know-how that enables you to save water, save money and help the environment by recycling organic 'waste', conserve and improve soil & have a healthy, lush, productive garden. Easy-to-read layout, great pics. \$20 for signed copy from author, incl postage, \$35 for two. Ph: 0417-569-411, or write to: Notable Products, PO Box 101, EUROA 3666.

BUILD YOUR OWN WIND TURBINE, 250 watts, 12/24 or 48 volts, using mostly recycled materials. For booklet or CD with full easy-to-follow instructions & photos, send \$29, incl p&h: Minshull, Box 39, TWO ROCKS, WA 6037.

I HAVE 106 'GRASS ROOTS' magazines incl *The Early Years* for sale. \$240 the lot, will not split. CALOUNDRA, Qld. Ph: 07-5491-6950.

WANTED: 'COLLINS AUSTRALIAN DO-IT-YOURSELF MANUAL' by John Archer with Albert Jackson & David Day. Ph: 03-5792-4000.

'NIMBIN NEWS MAGAZINE', is a cooperatively run access magazine with articles & information from Nimbin & other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles & others looking for the most sustainable way. We are one of the longest running alternative magazines & the Nimbin bioregion is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems. As networkers we scan many mags for suitable & scarce information for our readers. Subscription: 6 issues for \$20, sample \$3.50. Back copies 5 for \$12 posted. PO Box 209, NIMBIN 2480. *Beyond the Rainbow* – literacy mag. Sub: \$18 per year for 6 editions. Email: nimbinnews@nrg.com.au

'NEW VEGETARIAN & NATURAL HEALTH', the magazine of the Natural Health & Vegetarian societies. Subscribe today, \$30 yearly, and receive: 4 vital magazines, discounts at participating health food stores & natural therapies practitioners listed in magazine. Head Office, 28/541 High St, PENRITH, NSW 2750. Ph: 02-4721-5068.

BOOKS, NEW AND OLD. Australiana, lifestyle, Pacific, biography, horticulture, gardening, outdoors. Lists avail. BA & JM Wallace, Box 325, PORTLAND 3305.

COST OF ADS

Cost of Grassified ads does not include any extra formatting: extra bold text, indents, spaces, stars or other symbols. If you require an ad with formatting please enquire about our display advertising rates. Call Sue on 03-5792-4000.

SUPPRESSED & UNUSUAL TECHNOLOGIES CATALOGUE: Free energy devices, antigravity, hydrogen fuel, magnetic motors, alternate fuels & engines, high mileage 200+ topics. Send 6 x 50 c stamps to: Lostech Archive, Box 456-R, TOLGA, Qld 4882, Aust.

SECOND AND THIRD NZ WHOLE EARTH CATALOGUES, pub 1975, Alister Taylor, 218 & 370 pages of comprehensive info of self-sufficiency. Both volumes in VG condition. \$65 & \$85 + p&h ONO. Ph: 08-9240-2169, or 0417-358-827.

KEEN TO KEEP CHOOKS OR DUCKS but don't know anything about them? You need *Starting Out With Chickens*, a simple, easy-to-follow guide on everything a beginner needs to know. Ducks? Try *Starting Out With Ducks and Geese*. Both books are paperback size with around 56 pages and well illustrated. Great for kids too. Buy one at \$9.95 incl p&h or two for \$16.95 incl p&h. Australasian Poultry, PO Box 438, SEYMOUR 3661 or ph: 03-5792-4000.

'AUSTRALIA'S 12 SACRED PLACES': An exploration of Sacred Aboriginality, Geography, History & Modernity – \$48. 'CREATIVE HOMESCHOOLING': Bureaucracy, Resources, Teachers, Curriculum; Child Development, Creativity; Discipline; High School & Qualifications – \$28. '33 SACRED SUN SONGS': All-original score for primary school children incl notation, chords, lyrics & explanation on music to enliven language, maths, social studies, science and the seasonal festivals – \$18. Details on these three books by Alan Whitehead at website: www.sacredplaces.com.au Ph: 02-4787-5335, or ask at your local library.

ORGANIC GARDENING BOOKS by educator Jade Woodhouse, a permaculturist & sustainable gardener. *Compost to make Humus* – The essence of soil fertility, *Forest Gardening* – Food Forests, *Worm Farming* our saviour for the soil, *Organic Happy Healthy Chooks*, *Earth Friendly Organic Veggie Gardening*. For information & ordering any of these five books, ph: 07-5445-9034. www.simplynaturalorganic.com.

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ELMORE OIL distributed in Qld & nth NSW by Tony Linford, GHC Wholesale, PO Box 3586, LOGANHOLME, Qld 4129. Ph: 0407-747-850, fax: 07-3801-4464.

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ELMORE OIL avail from APB Distribution, 2/4 Ramsay Crt, KANGAROO FLAT, Vic 3555. Ph: 03-5447-3711, fax: 03-5447-3722. Website: www.elmoreoil.com.au We deliver anywhere in Australia & New Zealand.

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MOON PADS™ cloth pads & The Keeper® menstrual cup for menstruating women; Zappy Nappy® fitted cloth nappies & Woolies pure wool pilchers for your babies & infants. Earth-friendly, sustainable, reusable products, good for your purse, your health & our environment. Visit: www.moonpads.com.au or send SAE to: Moon Pads, PO Box 118, SANDY BAY, Tas 7006.

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TEEPEES, VIKING TENTS, medieval tents, swags, buckskin clothing. Seventeen years experience. BOJO Products, PO Box 112, AVENEL 3664. Ph: 0412-368-034, 03-5796-2753 AH.

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Website: www.frojel.com/members/bojo

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Website: www.supermoulds.com.au

FREE LIVESTOCK ADVERTISING plus gifts & craft items: www.farmcraftandcountry.com.au

SCIENCE OF LIFE COURSE, lessons nos 14 – 28 incl wanted, also any lessons after 106. Ph: 02-6733-2010.

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QUALITY GRAINMILL AND JUICER PRODUCTS. See our manual st/steel juicers & our combined juicer/grainmill for survival situations with no electricity. LB Healing Products, ph: 1800-025-005. Website: www.jucers.com

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GR 167 – 23 DECEMBER

STONEGROUND FLOUR in-home, with a SCHNITZER German quality hand or electric stone mill, 6 models from \$178. SCHNITZER MILLS, 420 Freemantle Rd, BATHURST 2795. Ph: 02-6336-9100. Website: www.schnitzer.com.au

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RAINFOREST SEED COLLECTORS national link-up. Buy & sell local seed. Our newsletter has lots to offer. Local seed grows better & doesn't pollute your gene pool. Quarterly newsletter subs \$20, concession \$10. Offer local seed – free subs. RSC, Private Mail Bag, BELLINGEN 2454. Ph: 02-6655-2233.

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HOME PLANS. *The Earth Builders Plan Catalogue* (180 pages), includes: 92 plans for handcrafted buildings (83 homes & 9 workshops, cabin & carport) of mudbrick, rammed earth, stone, pole frame, timber, poured earth, and straw bale (with construction details). Two working drawings for two homes are incl (11 x A3 sheets per working drawing). Mail \$125 (postage has been included) to John Barton Building Design, 89 Camden Rd, NEWTOWN, (Geelong) Vic 3220 or ph: 03-5222-5774 with credit card details. Money orders & cheques accepted. Free brochure avail. Individual home plans drafted & documented.

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Website: <http://users.pipeline.com.au/jbarton>

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COURSES

STRAWBALE BUILDING, SA: Weekend workshop – Building with Strawbales: 6, 7 Nov with Graham & Annemarie Brookman at The Food Forest, & Lance Kairi, SA's strawbale builder. Contact Annemarie Brookman, details next ad.

WORKSHOPS AT THE FOOD FOREST, a 15 ha permaculture farm. Fruit & Nut Growing: 10 Oct. Sustainable House Design: 24 Oct. Compost Toilets & Reedbed Systems: 21 Nov. Organic Vegetables & Free-range Poultry: 28 Nov. Permaculture Design Certificate: Jan 2005. Contact Annemarie Brookman at The Food Forest, PO Box 859, GAWLER, SA 5118. Ph/fax: 08-8522-6450

Email: brookman@bigpond.com

Website: www.users.bigpond.com/brookman

PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSES with Rick & Naomi Coleman, Southern Cross Permaculture Institute. Next course 26 November – 11 December 2004. Call Naomi: 03-5664-3301 for info or email: scpi@tpg.com.au Website: www.southerncrosspermaculture.com.au

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CORRESPONDENCE PROGRAMS: Aroma-therapy Dip, Vitamin & Nutrition Therapy Dip, Animal Therapies (The Green Vet), Herbal Therapies, Folk Medicine, Psychic Healing, Celtic Wicca, Psychic Development. Free brochure from: Wiccan Home Studies (estab 25 yrs), The Friendly School, PO Box 138, SURRY HILLS 2010. Ph: 02-9319-6166. Email: owlhome@ozemail.com.au

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STRANDED COTTON BUNDLES, 100 x 8 m skeins, 50 colours – \$28 post free. Big bundles stranded cotton, 230 colours – \$50 post free. Send 50 c stamp for list. ARTY & CRAFTY, PO Box 40, DAW PARK, SA 5041. Ph: 08-8277-3763, fax: 08-8277-9402.

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PLACING AN AD?

See page 75 for details

SUNDARA RETREAT, quiet, secluded, alternative community, cabin, budget prices. Ph: 02-6633-7037 AH.

Website: www.sundararetreat.net

MORUYA – FAR SOUTH COAST NSW, bush cabins, romantic 1 b/r & family 2 b/rs. Open fires. \$350 p/w, \$125 per w/end. Ph: 02-4474-2542, 0427-199-156.

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CALENDAR EVENTS

FAMILY DAY AT COLLINGWOOD CHILDREN'S FARM. Bring your family along to see the milking of the cow at 10am, pony rides & hay rides at 10.30 & also after lunch. BBQ lunch. We have a family day on the first Sunday of each month with a different theme each time. On from 10 – 3pm, Collingwood Children's Farm, St Heliers St, ABBOTSFORD Vic.

FOOTHILLS FAMILY MUSIC CAMP, 20, 21 November 2004. Weekend of music making & circus skills for all ages. No experience necessary. Come & enjoy workshops in singing, instrumental ensemble, marimbas, dancing, circus skills. Beautiful bush setting on the Mitchell River. Ph: 03-5145-5416.

Email: foothillsmusic@hotmail.com

VERY SPECIAL KIDS, a support group for families of children with life-threatening illnesses is holding its 7th annual Piggy Bank Appeal from 10 September to 17 October. A range of fun activities during that time will raise money for essential family services. Donate where you see the giant pink piggy banks, or by phoning 1800-888-875. Ph: 03-9804-6222 for more details of activities. Website: www.vsk.org.au

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Website: www.herononearth.com



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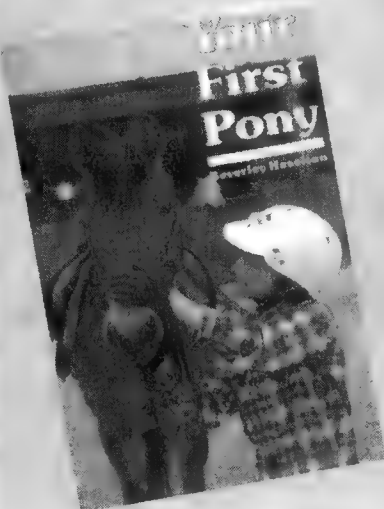
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See page 82 for order form.



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SAFE DISEASE AND PEST CONTROL with Phytonic preparations, a blend of homoeopathic & radionic preps for the control of grubs, aphids, powdery mildew, nematodes & many others. Further info ring: 0403-710-856.
WANTED: Ongoing access to organic almonds in small quantity. Ph: 02-6733-2010.

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NATIONAL ALLERGY ASSOCIATION of Australia (NAAA) & ECO-CHOICE (our mail-order store). Enquiries; information; clinics; membership & catalogue. Contact NAAA, PO Box 48, HARRIS PARK, NSW 2150. Ph: 0415-928-028.
Email: naaaauz@yahoo.com

Perendales

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Compost Toilets & Reedbed Systems: 21 Nov.
Organic Vegetables & Free-range Poultry: 28 Nov.
Permaculture Design Certificate: Jan 2005. Contact Annemarie Brookman at The Food Forest, PO Box 859, GAWLER, SA 5118. Ph/fax: 08-8522-6450
Email: brookman@bigpond.com
Website: www.users.bigpond.com/brookman
PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSES with Rick & Naomi Coleman, Southern Cross Permaculture Institute. Next course 26 November – 11 December 2004. Call Naomi: 03-5664-3301 for info or email: scpi@tpg.com.au Website: www.southerncrosspermaculture.com.au

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Holistic and organic-type methods. Coloured, gentle, fine-fleeced Alpacas for breeding, pets or stock guards.

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Quiet, quality, well-handled Dexter cattle available. Purebred and Grades.

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Docile, easy care, medium size, white wool, 12th century British breed sheep.

Rams - top quality prime lamb sires.

Best wool of all Downs breeds. Rams and ewes available.

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Young or pack trained donkeys occasionally for sale.

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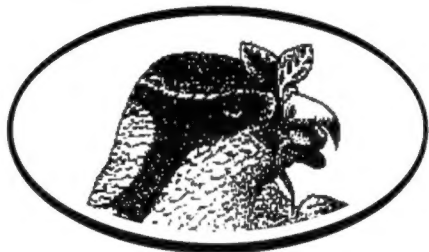
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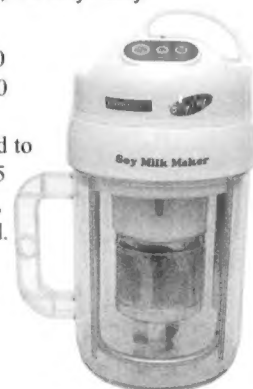
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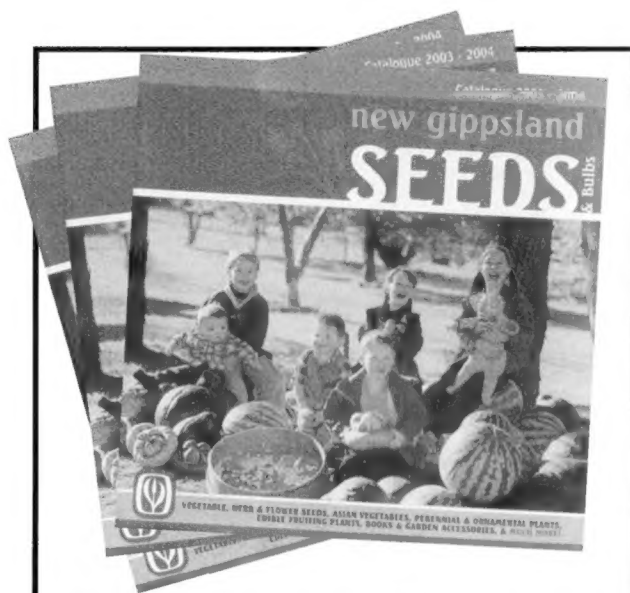
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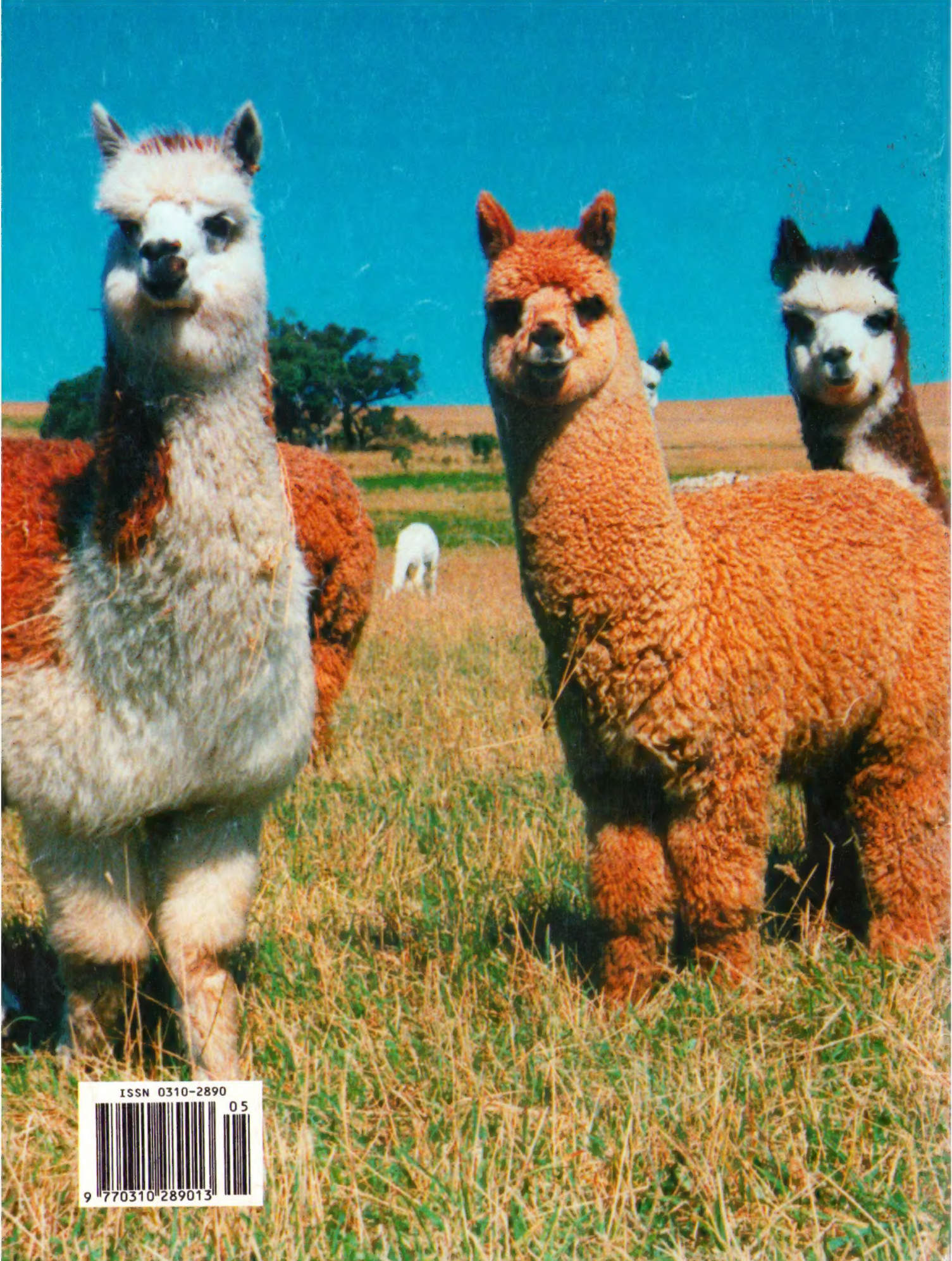
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